

# Investi GATORS

Heist and Seek



*New York Times*-Bestselling Author

**John Patrick Green**



# Investi GATORS

Heist and Seek



**:01**  
First Second



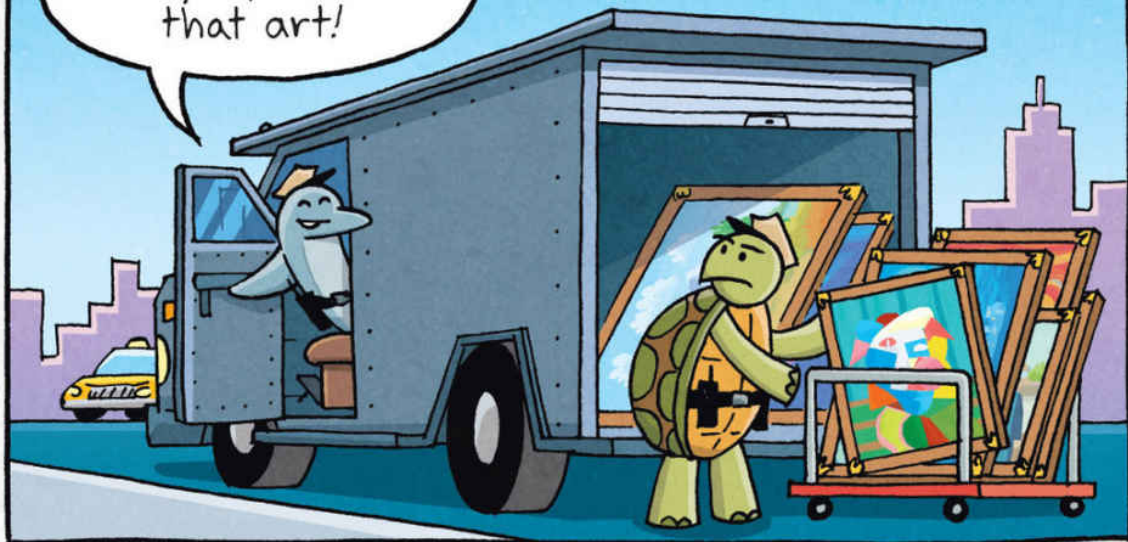


# Chapter 1

*It's an exciting day, as precious cargo enters the country...*



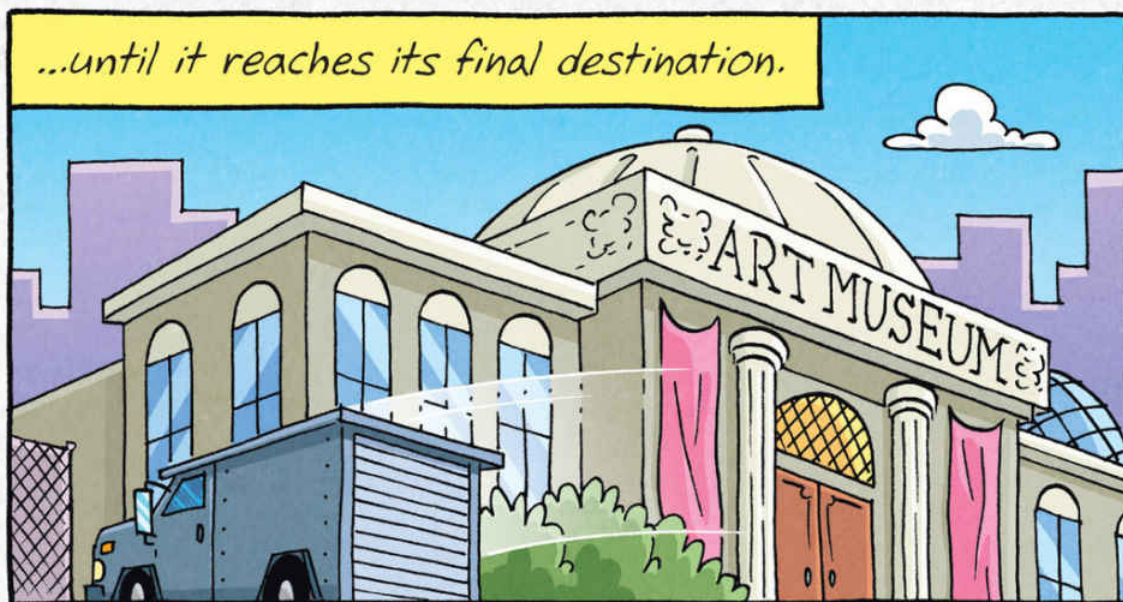
Hurry up loading that art!



*...and makes its way toward the city!*

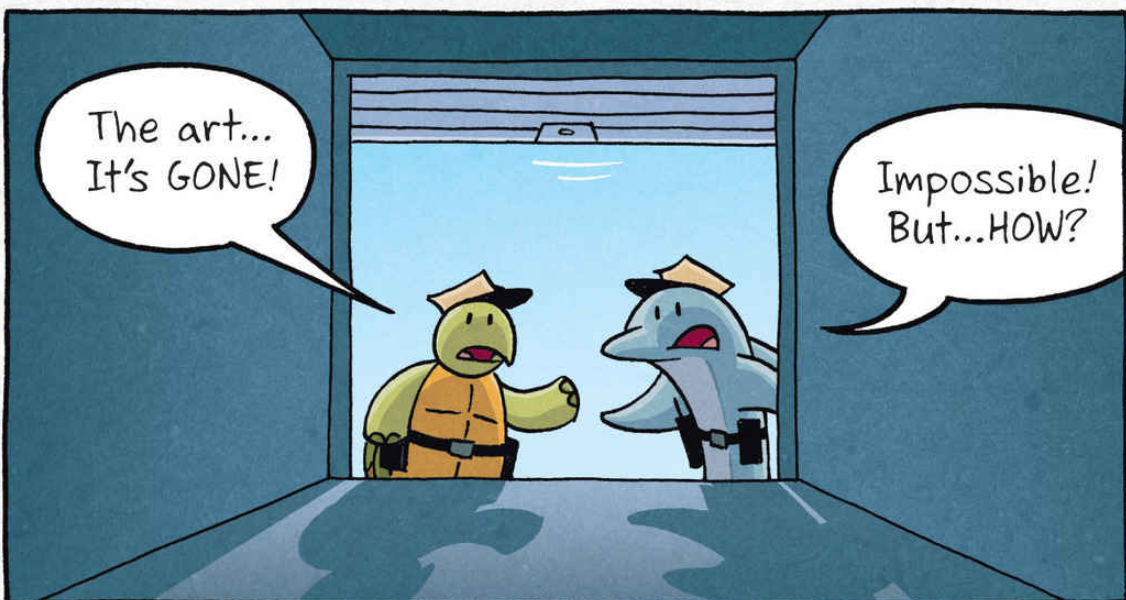
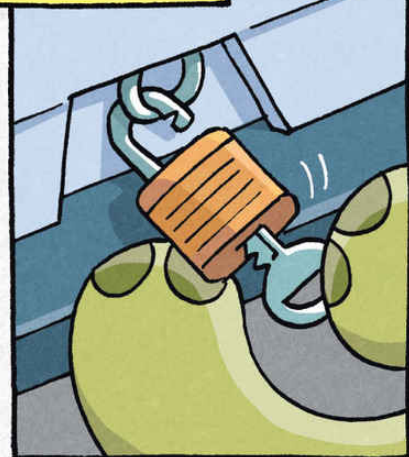




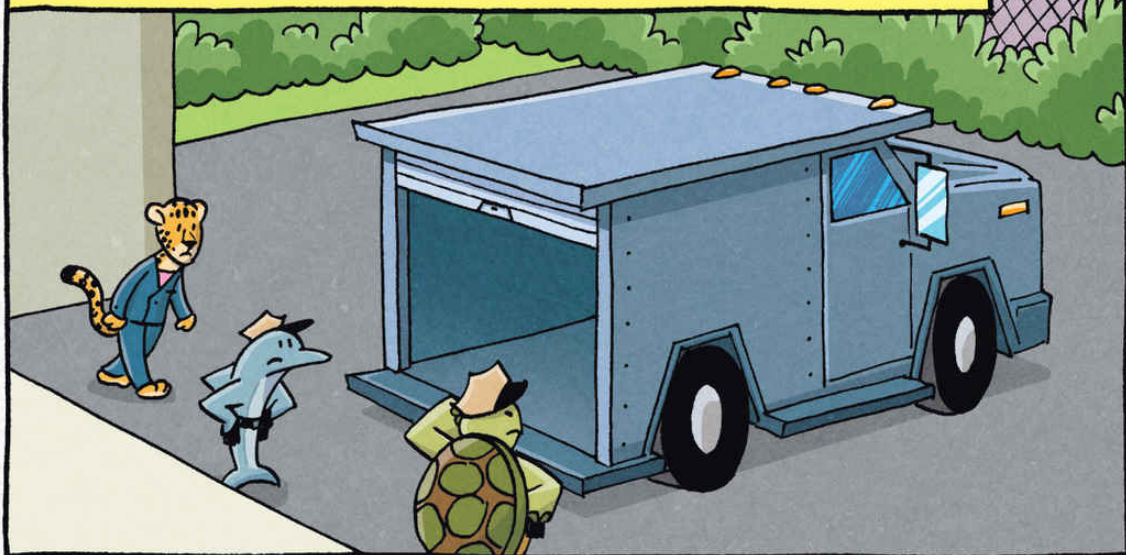




*But when it's time to remove the contents...*

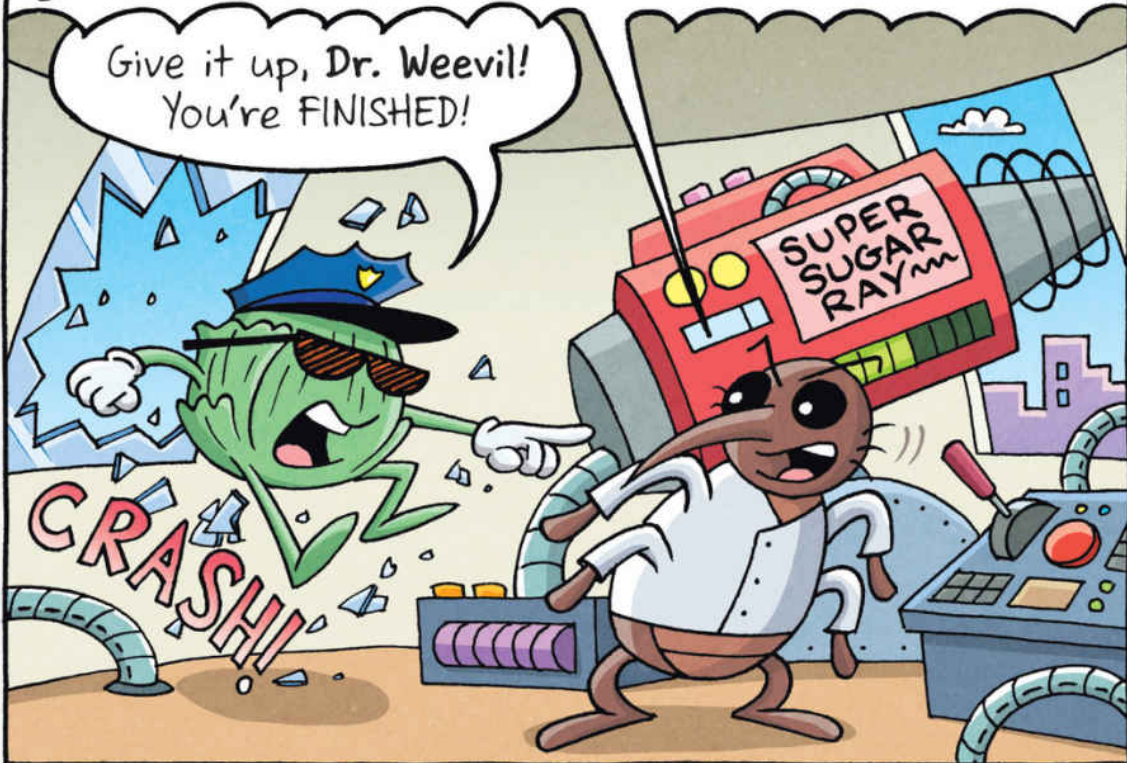


*Who can solve this mystery? This is a job for...*





# DETECTIVE COLE!





With the city's **best detective**  
my hostage, the mayor has no  
choice but to pay my ransom,  
or I'll turn this town into *dust*!



Well, not *dust*.  
*Sugar*. Because I  
like to eat *sugar*.



You may be a **weevil**...but you don't  
have to be **EVIL**! Listen to me—



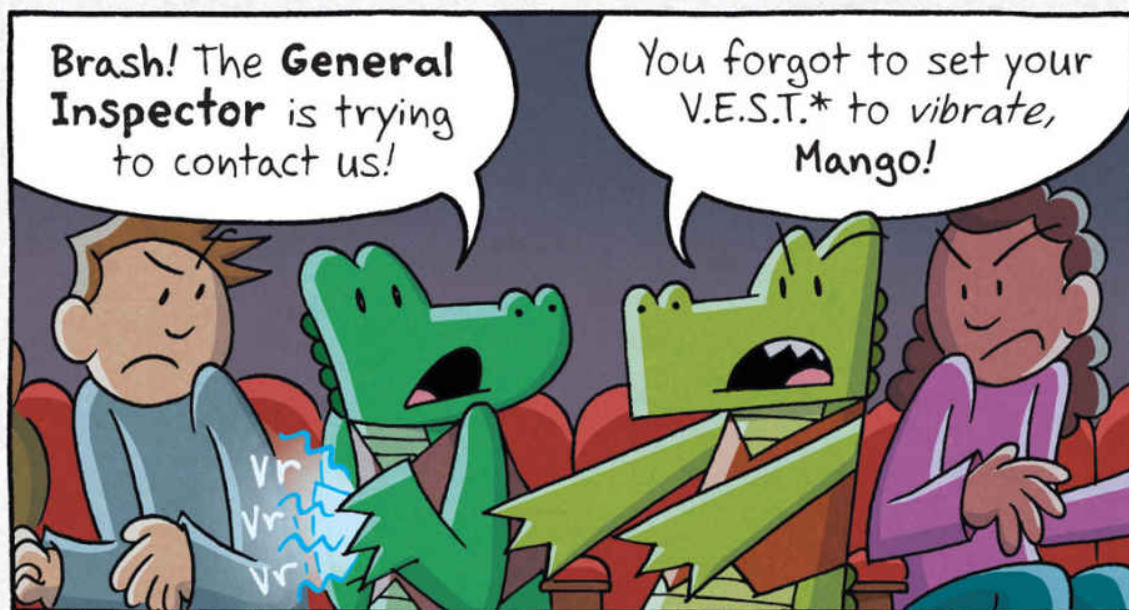
To *YOU*? The only leafy green  
I listen to is **COLD, HARD CASH**!

**NO ONE CAN STOP ME!** Not even the—



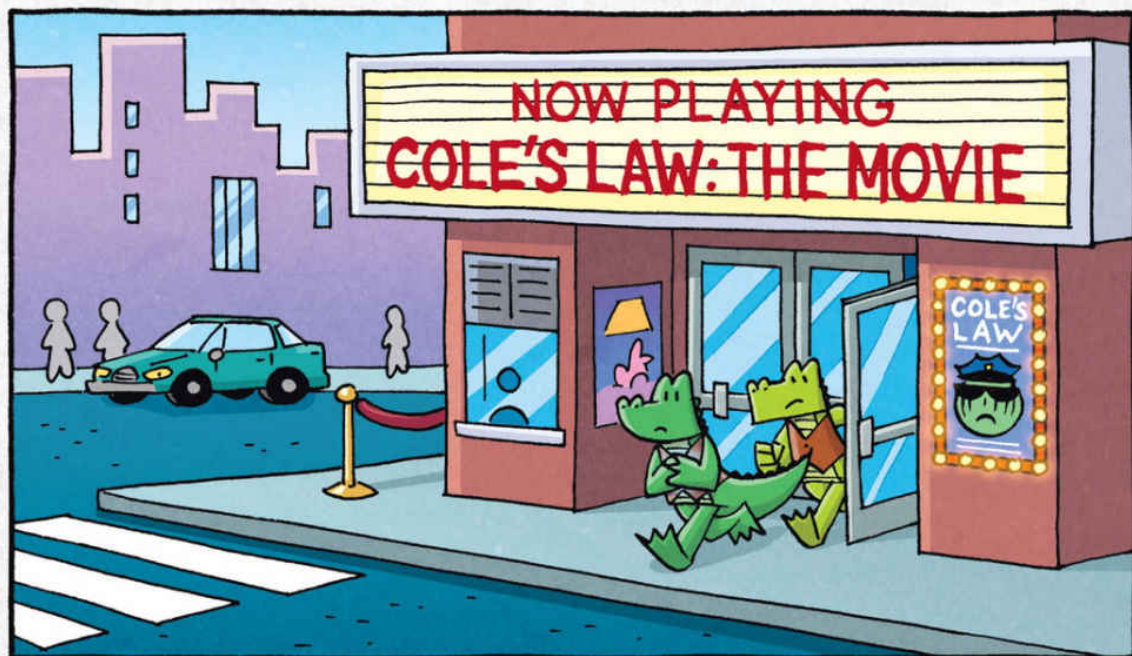


# INVESTIGATORS!

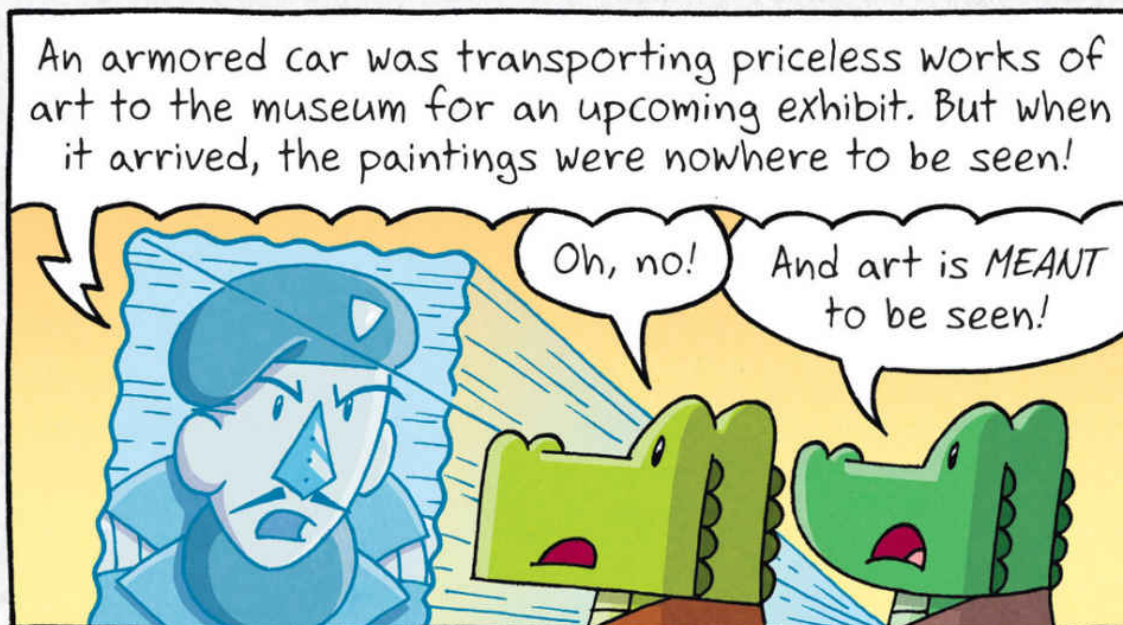


\*Very Exciting Spy Technology

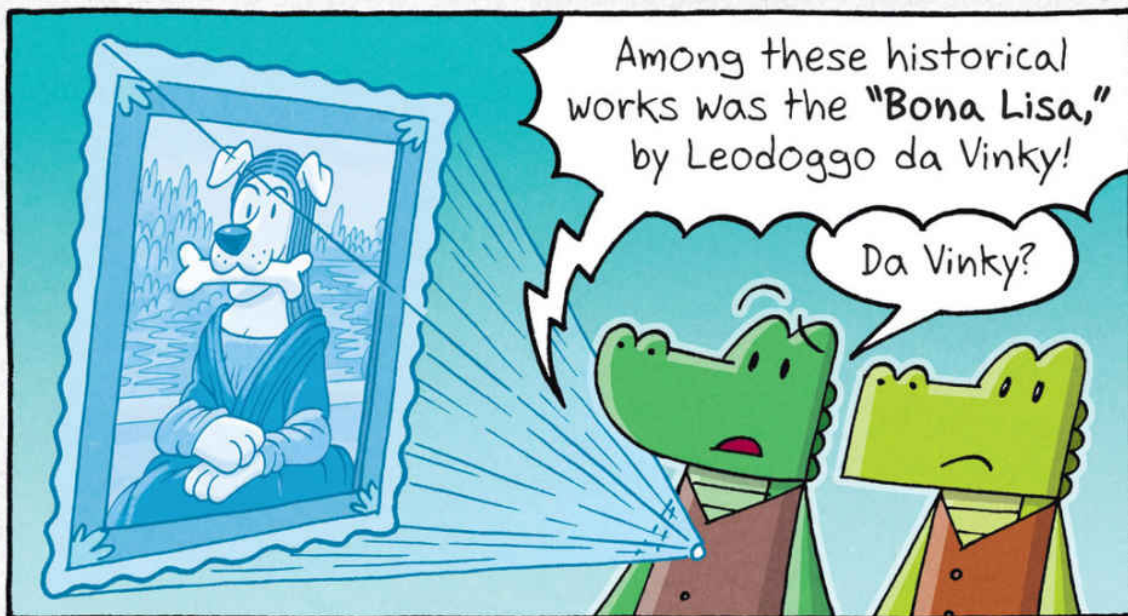




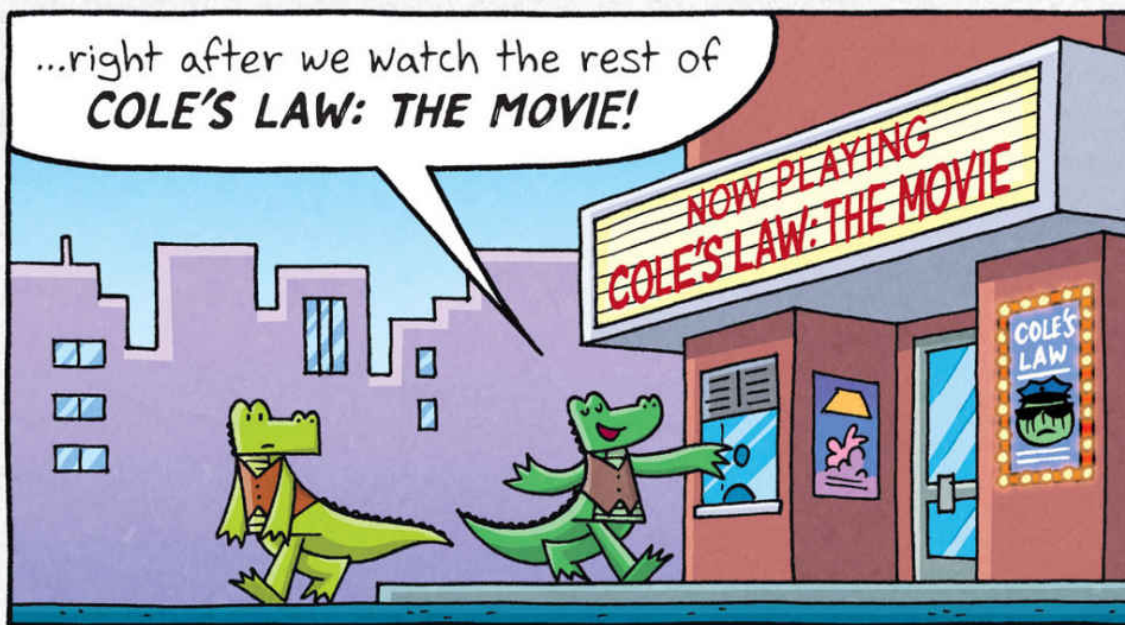






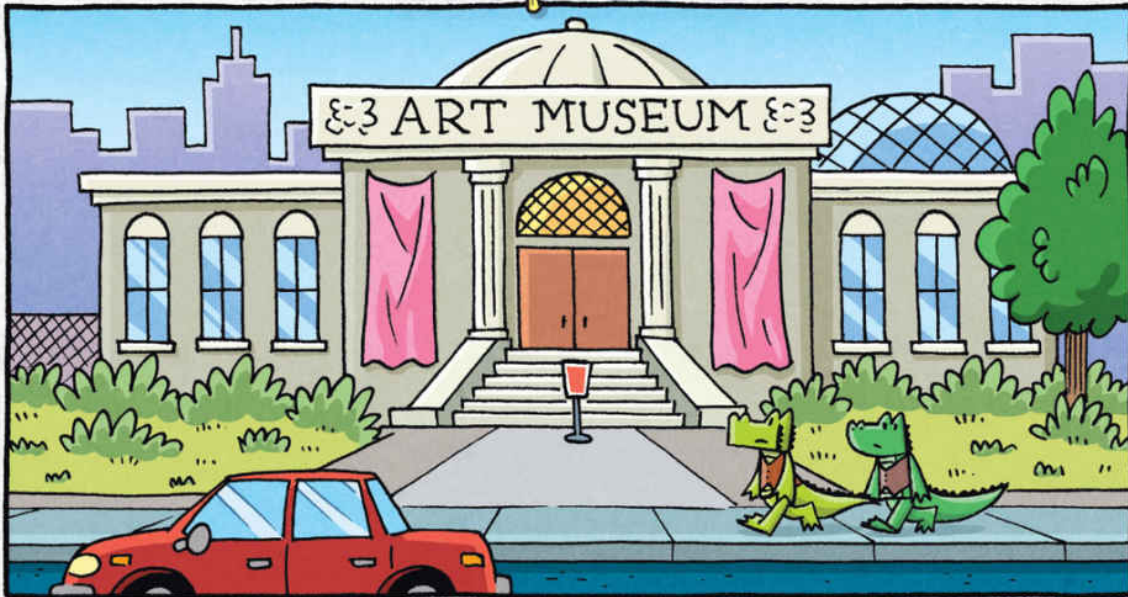








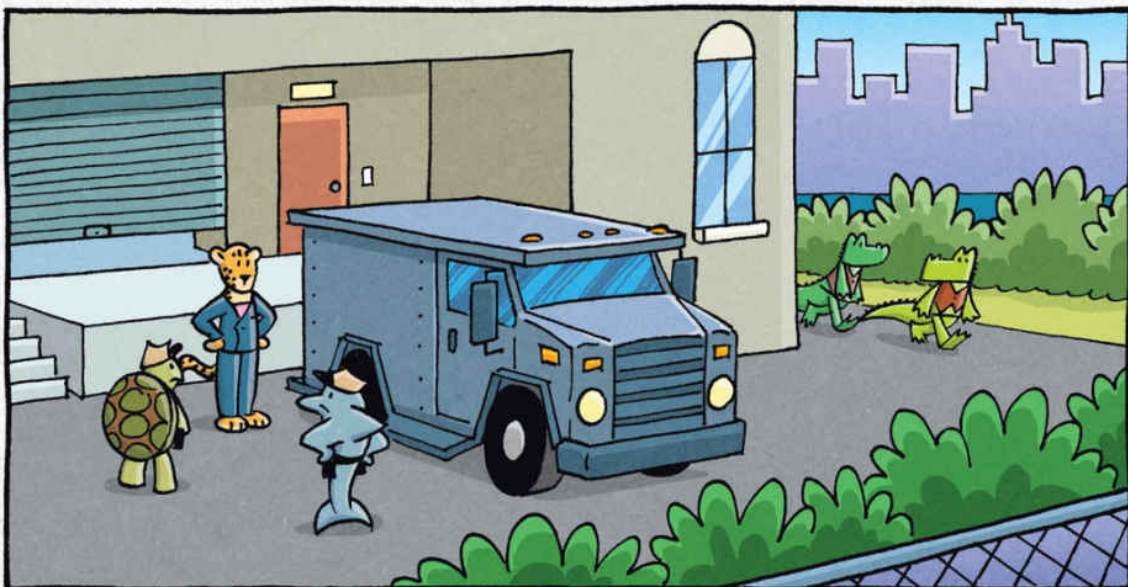
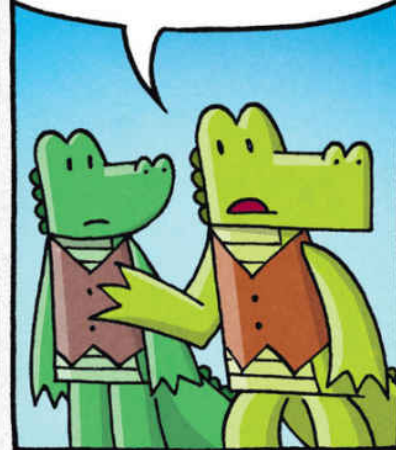
## Chapter 2



Dang, it's closed. Guess we'll just have to go see a movie instead.



Let's find the staff entrance.











\*Special Undercover Investigation Teams

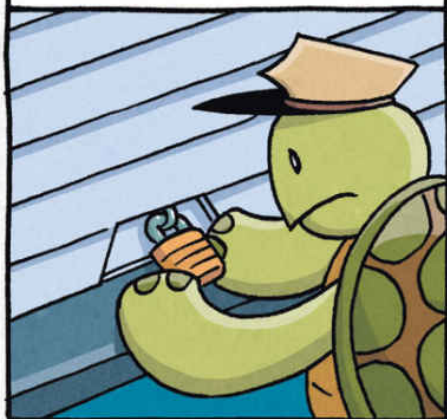




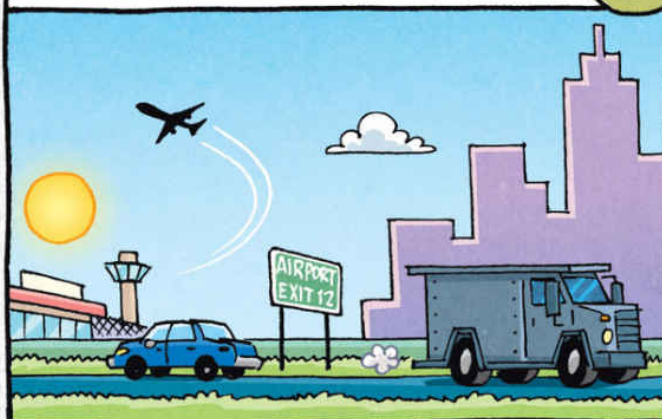
We picked the art up at the airport this morning...



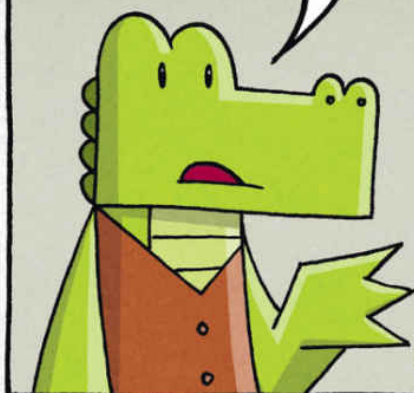
...made sure it was safe and secure...



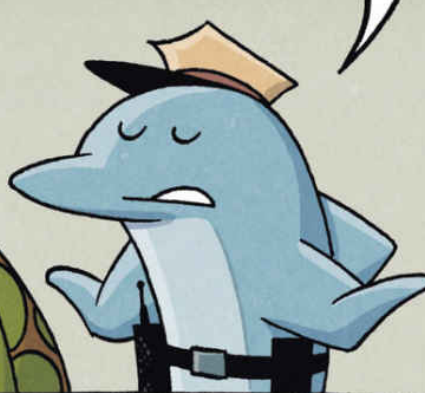
...and drove right back to the museum!



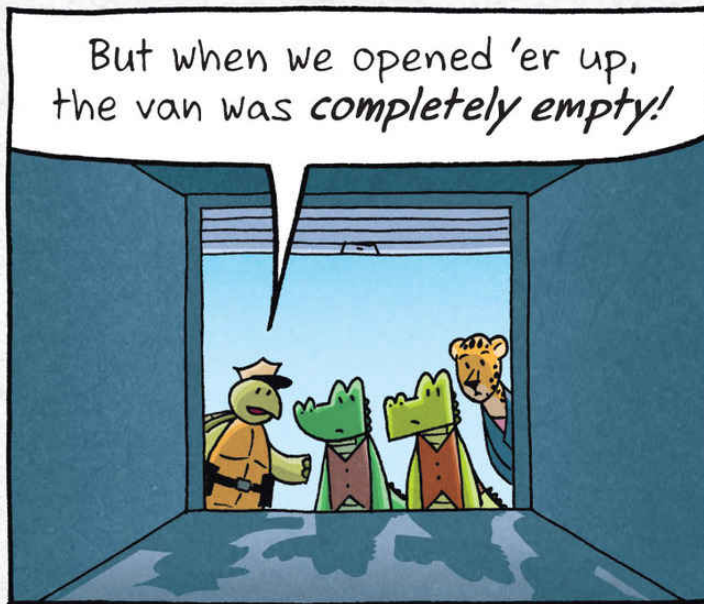
Did you make any stops along the way?



None! You know, except for red lights and stop signs.









Almost EVERY piece of art for the gala vanished outta this van on its way to the museum.



The big red-carpet shindig later this week.



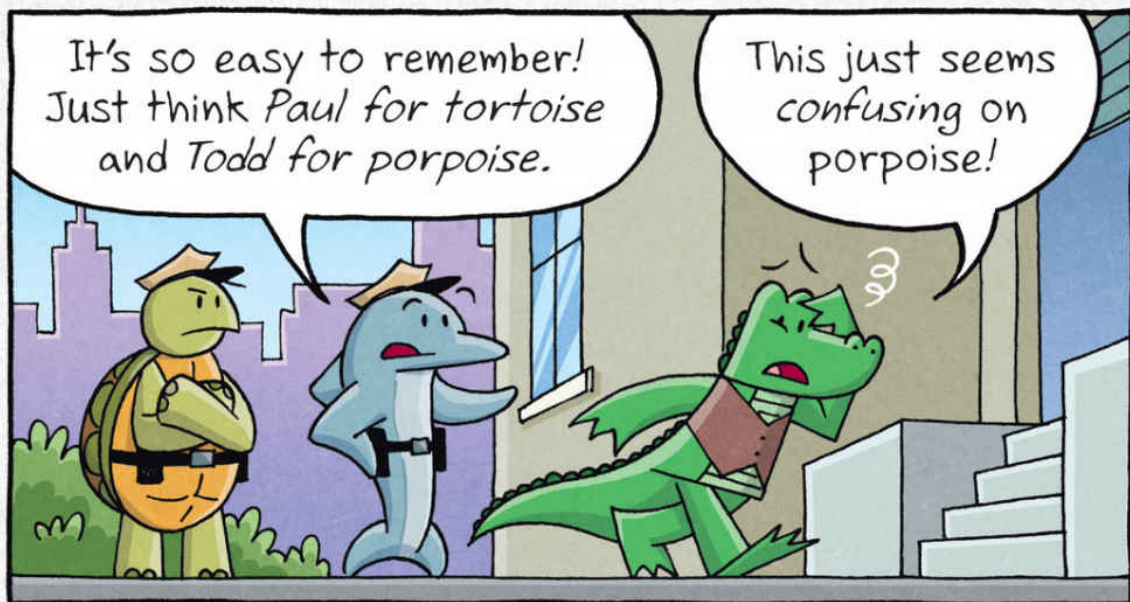
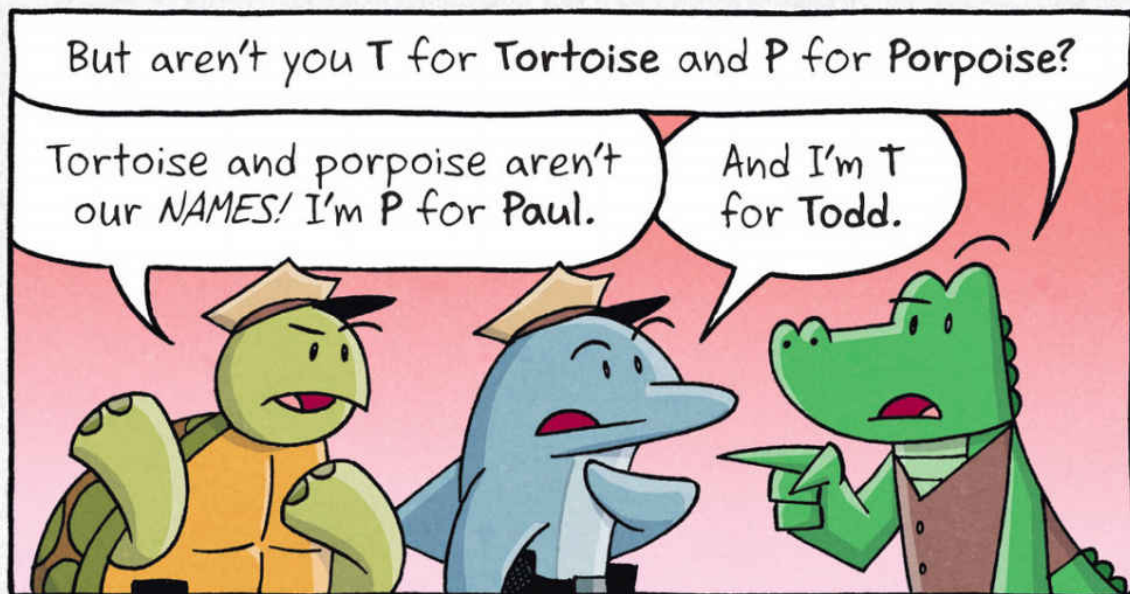
Is any more art expected to arrive for this gala?



My boss, the museum curator, would know. You can find him inside.









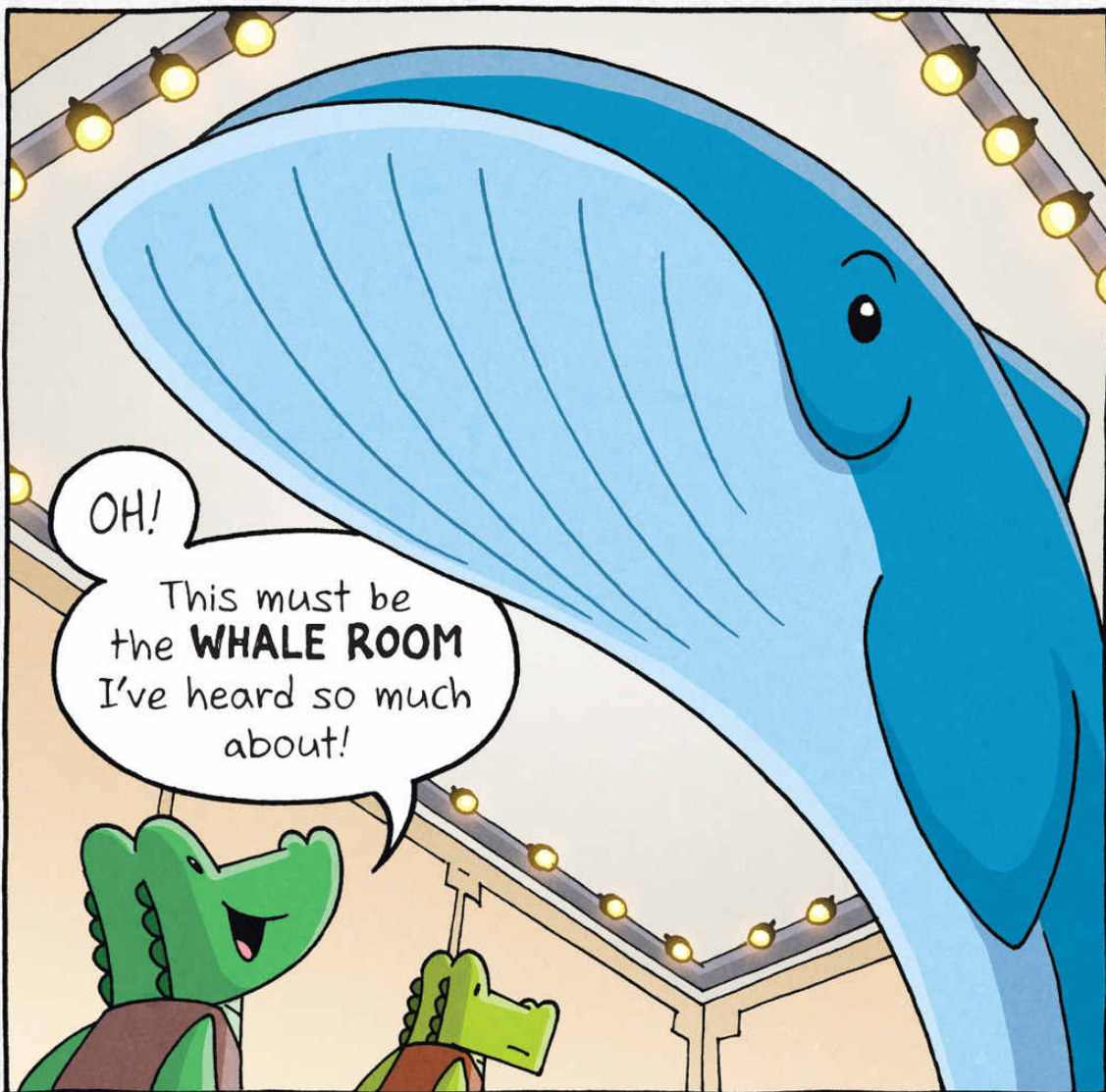
## Chapter 3





Someone got in and out of that armored car while it was moving without the security guards even noticing? I say there's a chance one or both of 'em are lyin'.

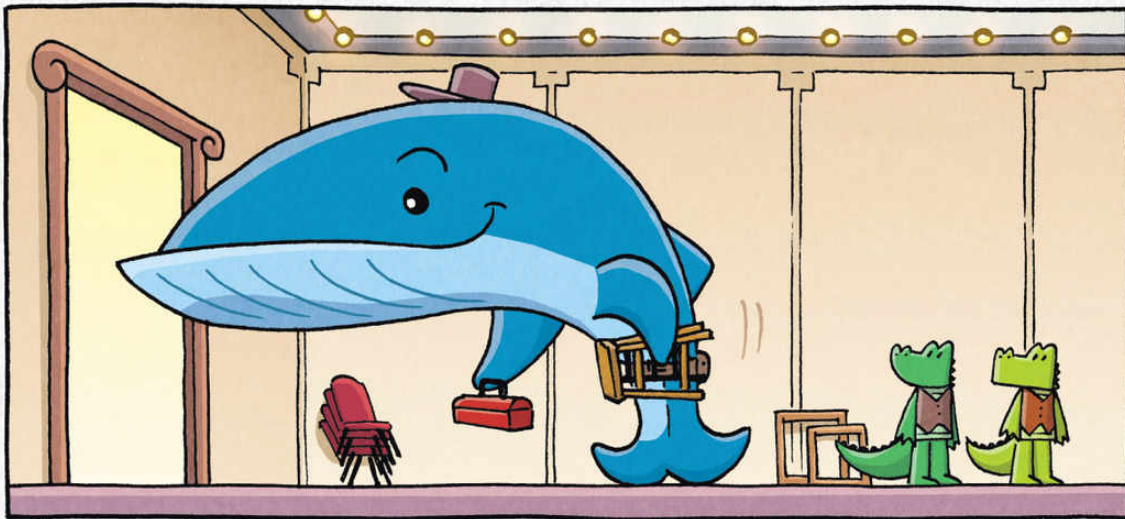
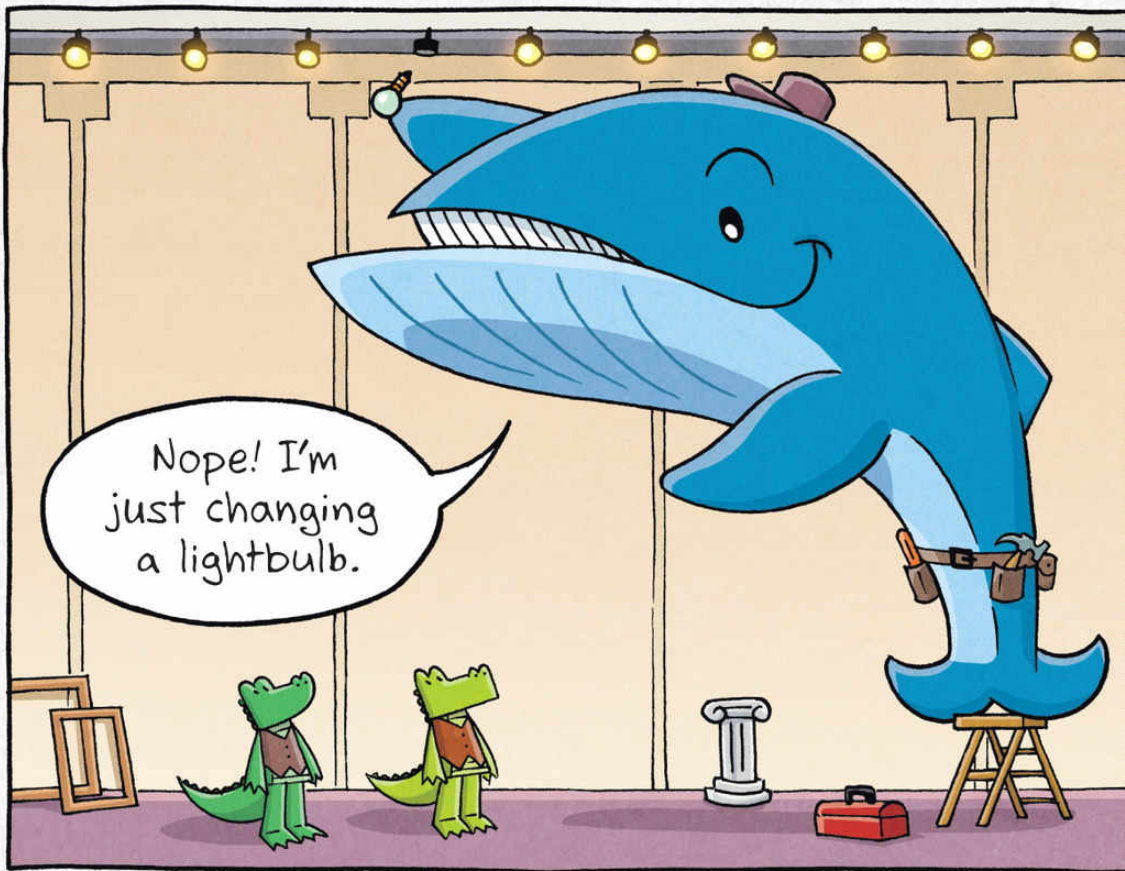
There's no lion. But there is a porpoise, a tortoise, and a cheetah, oh my.



OH!

This must be the **WHALE ROOM** I've heard so much about!











You must be here about the missing paintings! I am the museum curator and registrar, Thelonious Snoot.

Snoot? That's a funny name.  
Anyway, my name's Mango.



Your staff told us all  
of that art was for  
an upcoming gala?

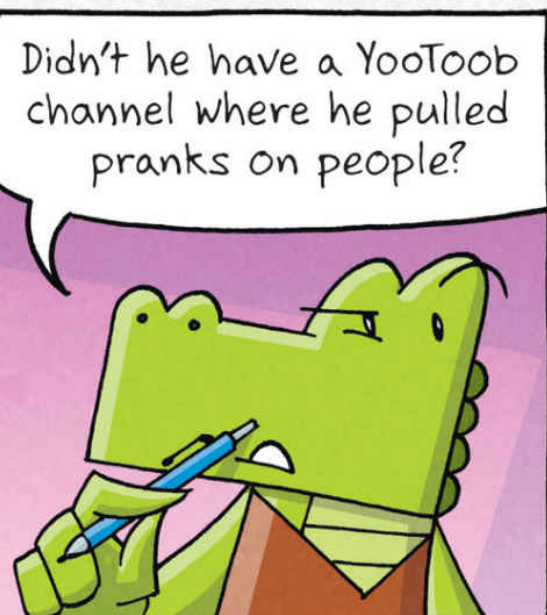
It's our *GRANDEST*  
event of the year. I  
had the most famous  
paintings by the most  
important artists in  
history flown in from  
*all over the world*  
for it!



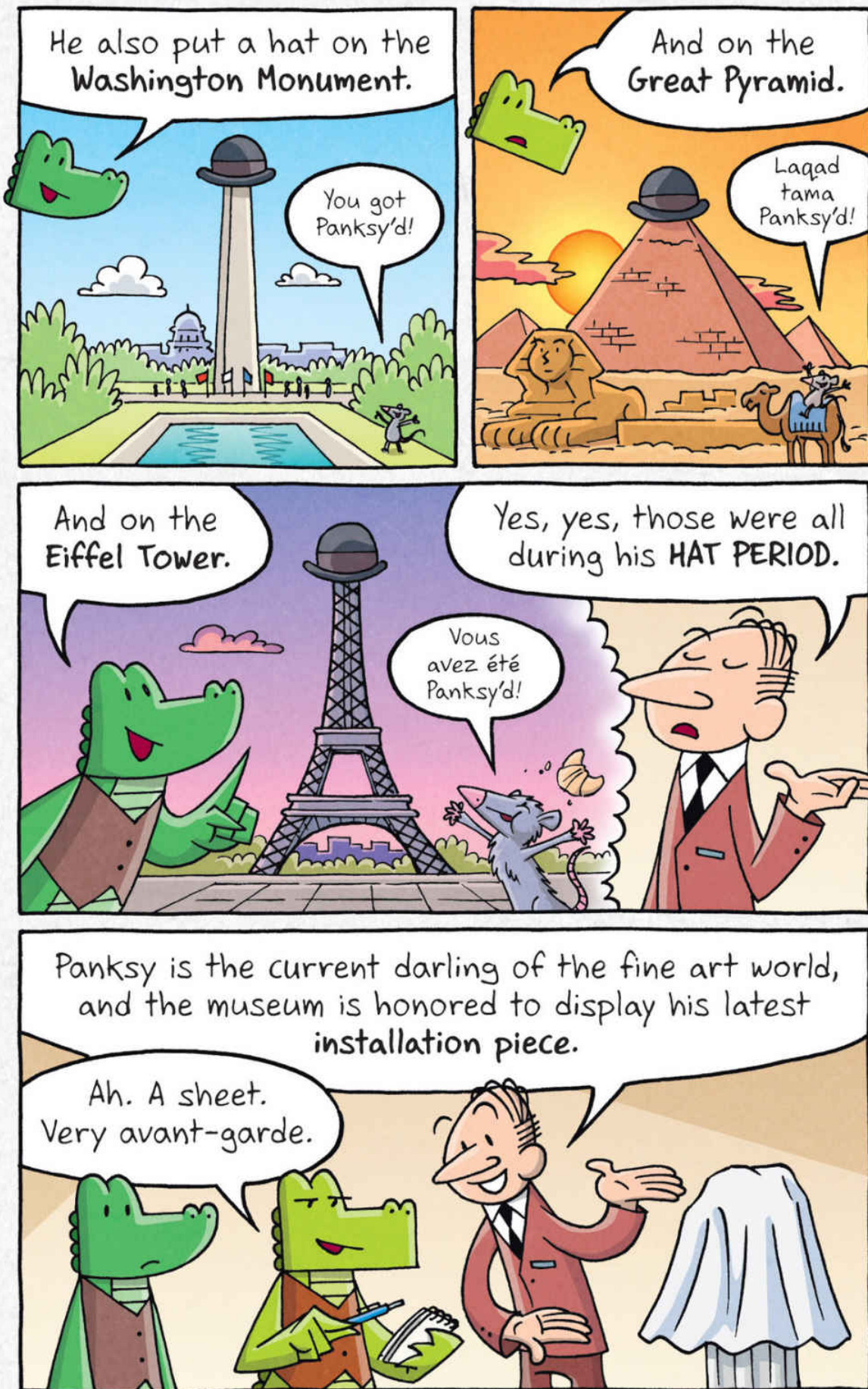
Leodoggo da Vinky! Vincent van Gopher! Frida Jello!  
Pablo Pigasso! Edvard Munchies! Jackson Mollusk!  
Mary Cassettedeck! Bob Ross! And many more!



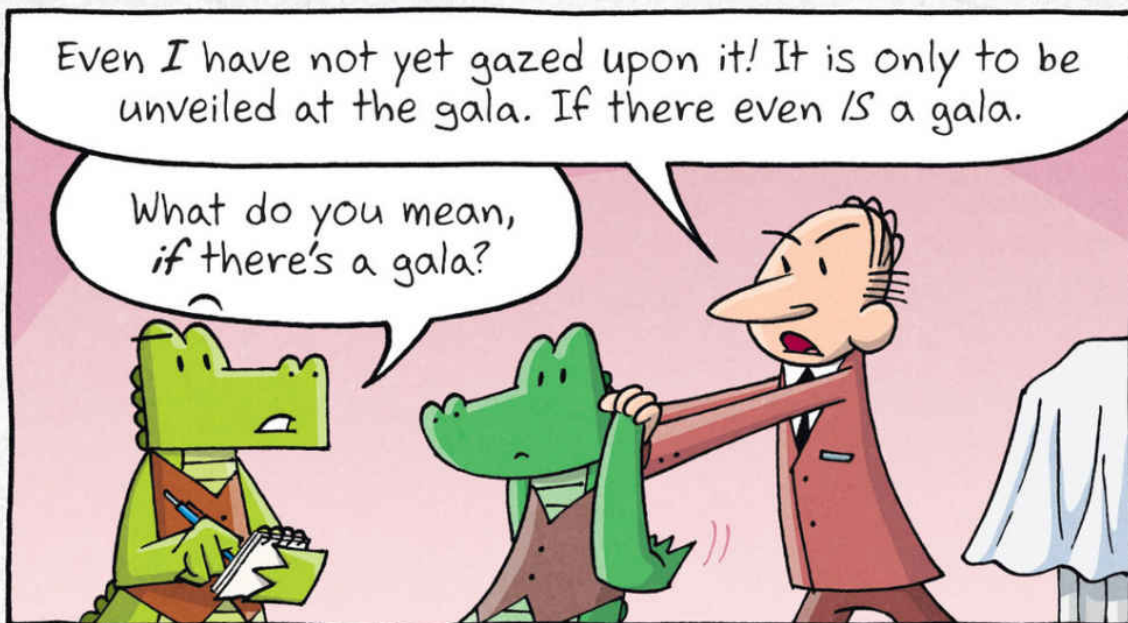










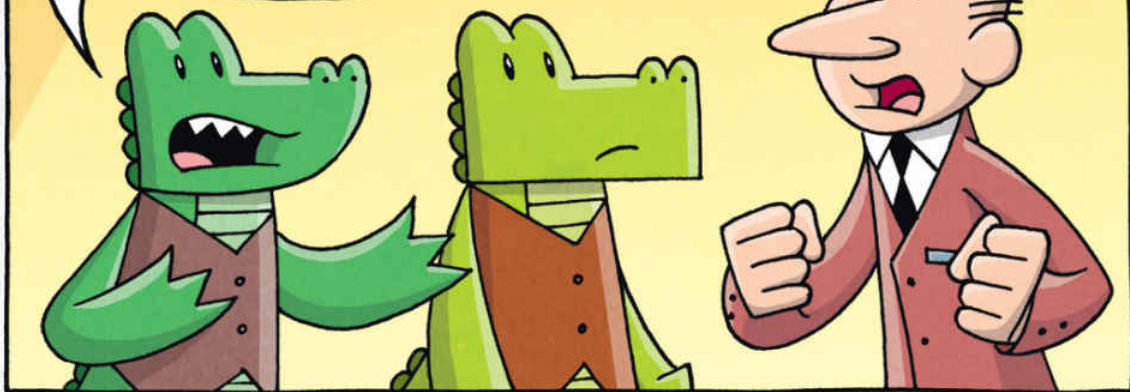




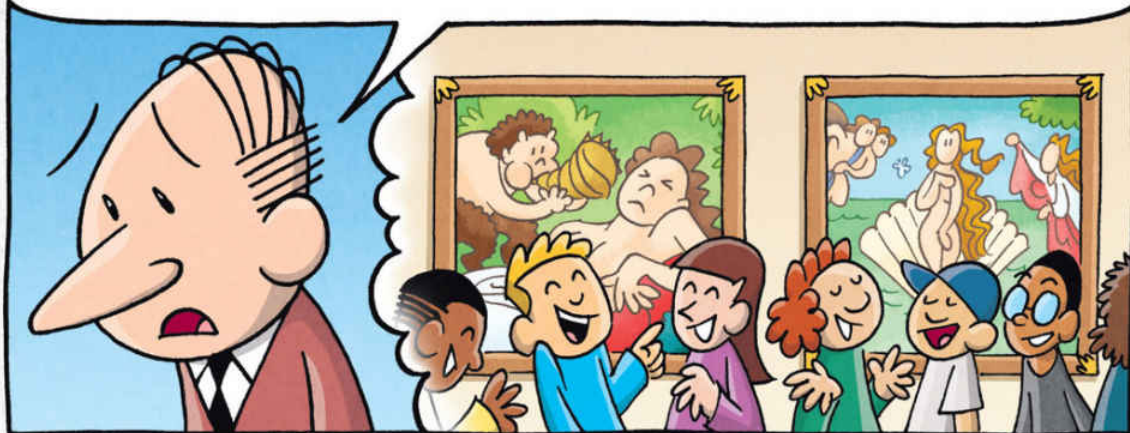


And then the museum will be closed...*permanently!* Without the gala, the city council will have just the excuse they need to *defund the arts!*

De-fun the arts? Why? Art is *SO MUCH* fun!



Indeed. But there'll be no more school field trips... No more smiling faces of the children laughing at the Bootycellis... And, most tragically, no more fancy galas!

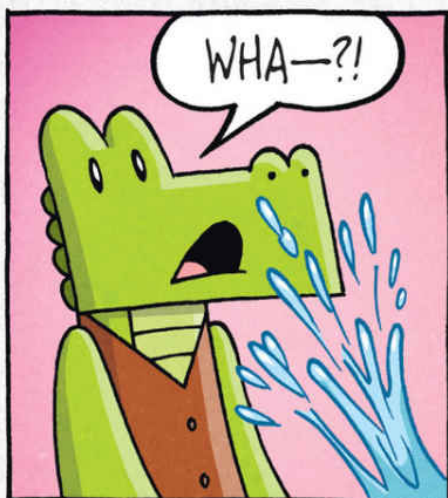




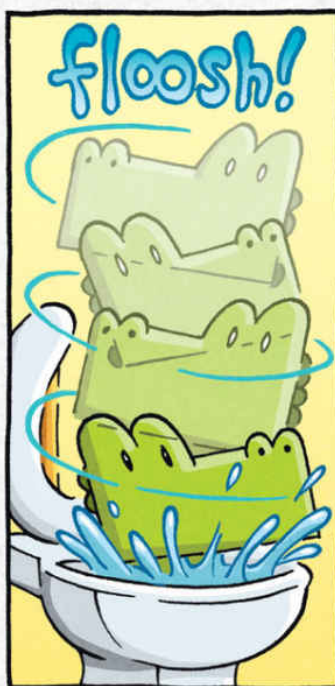


\*See **InvestiGators** books 1-5!



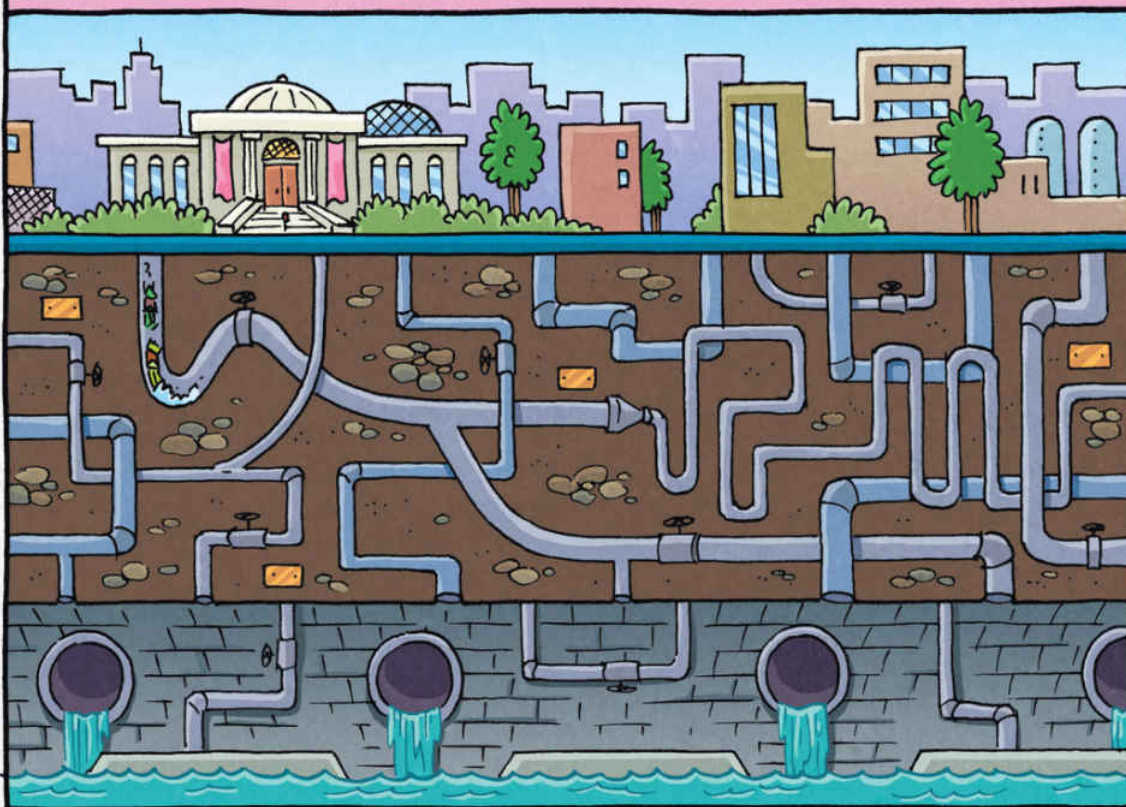








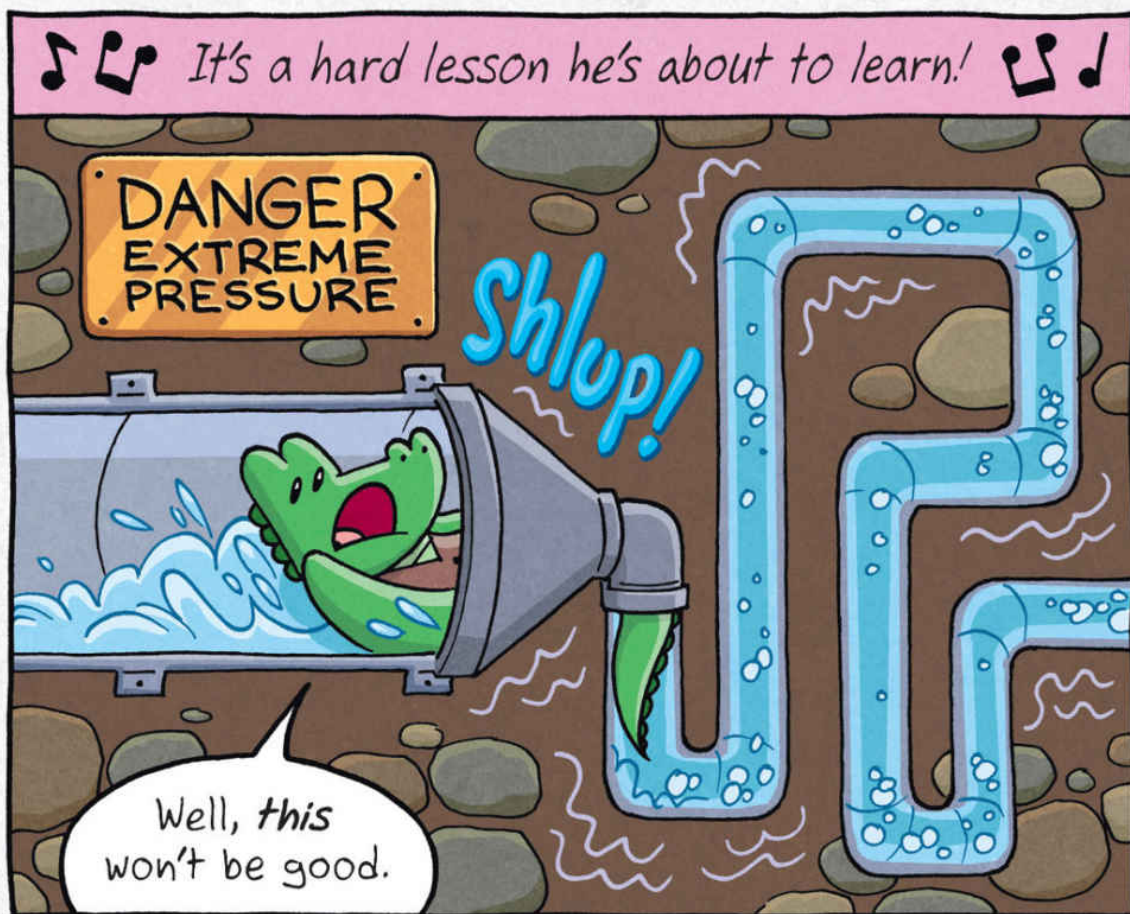
InvestiGators, in pipes underground!



It's the fastest way to get across town!

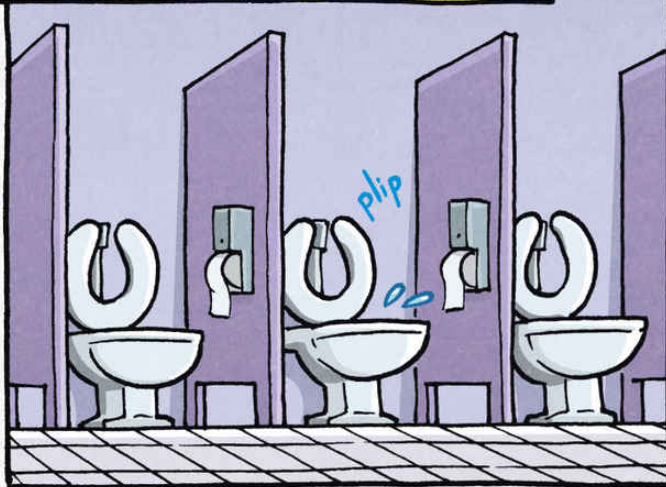




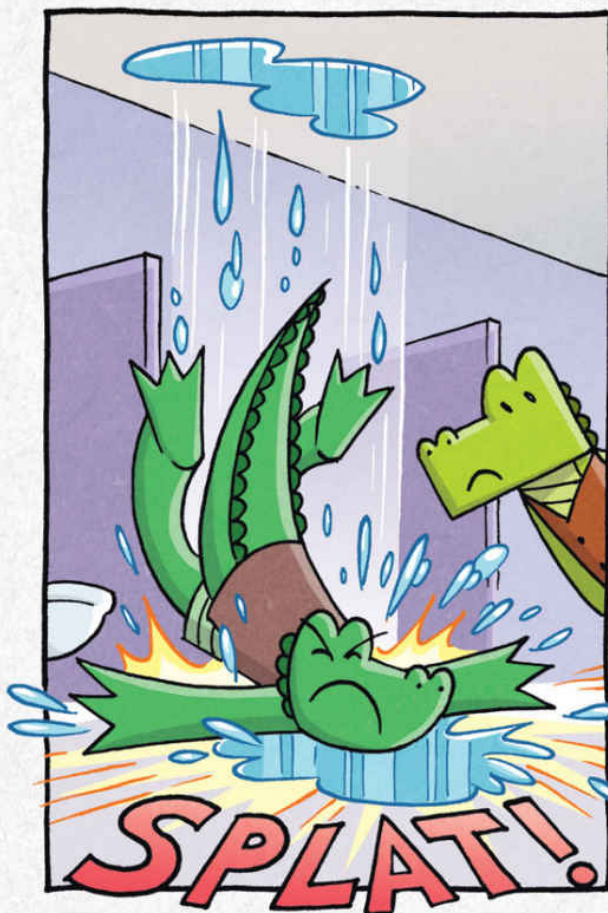




Below the city, in S.U.I.T.'s secret headquarters...

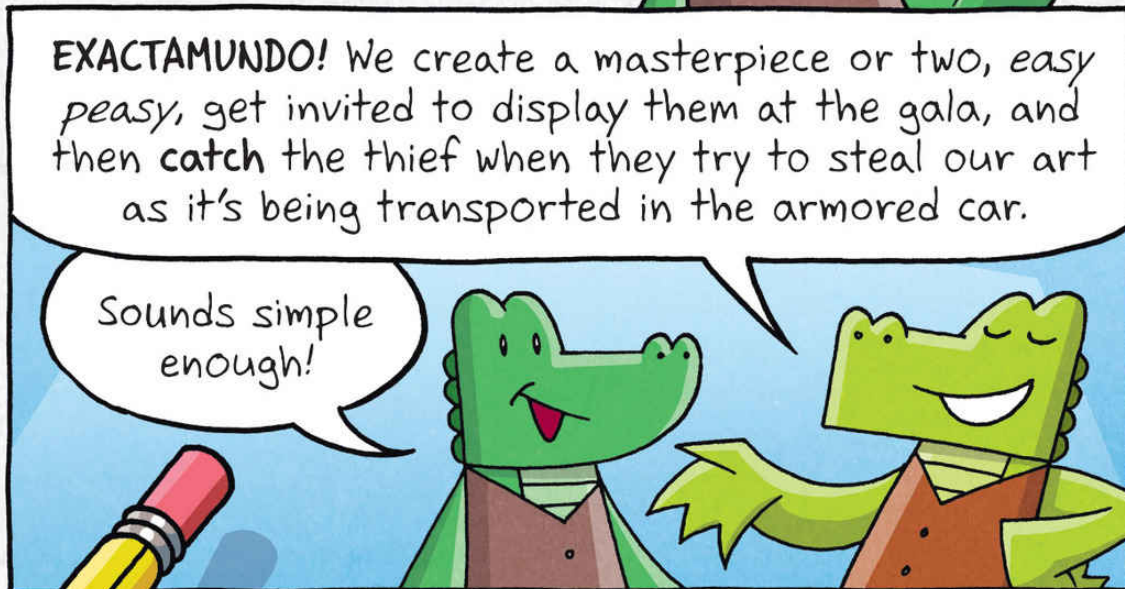
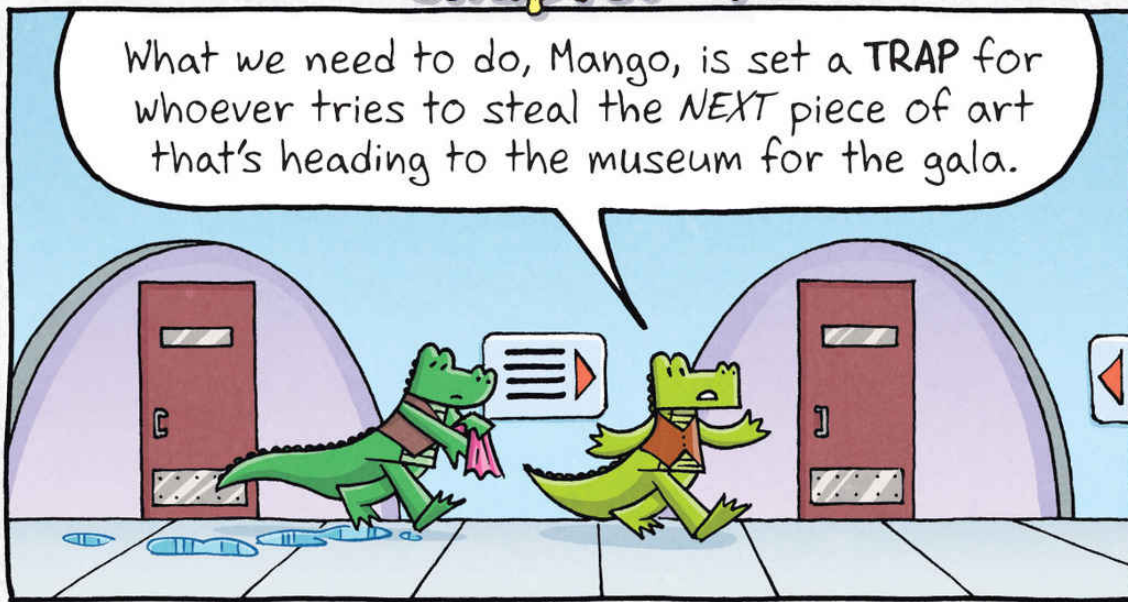




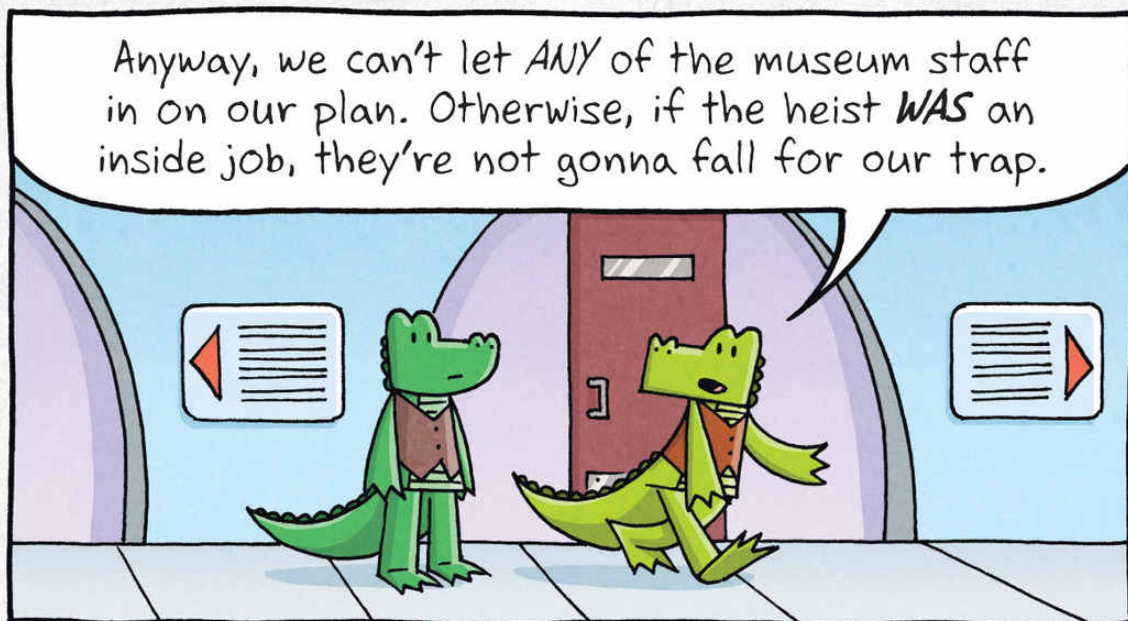




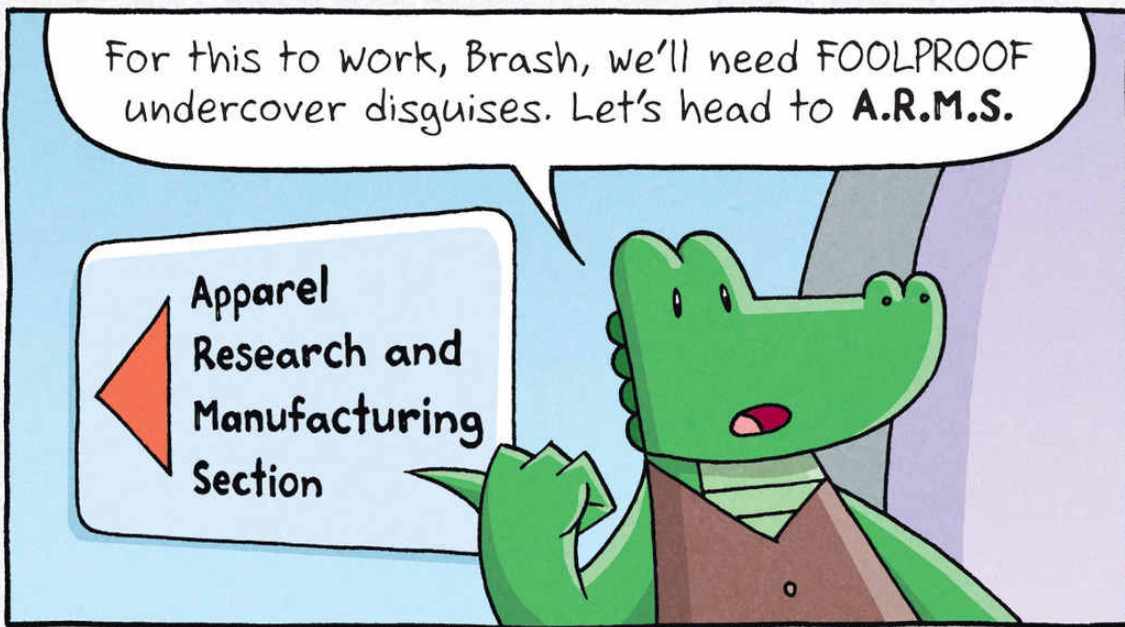
## Chapter 4



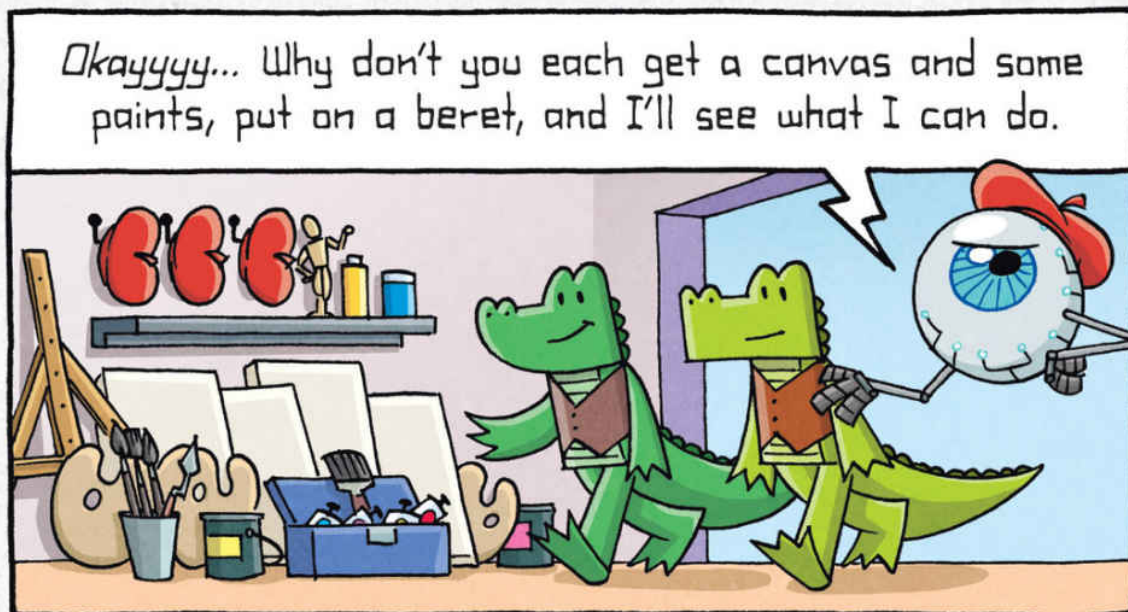
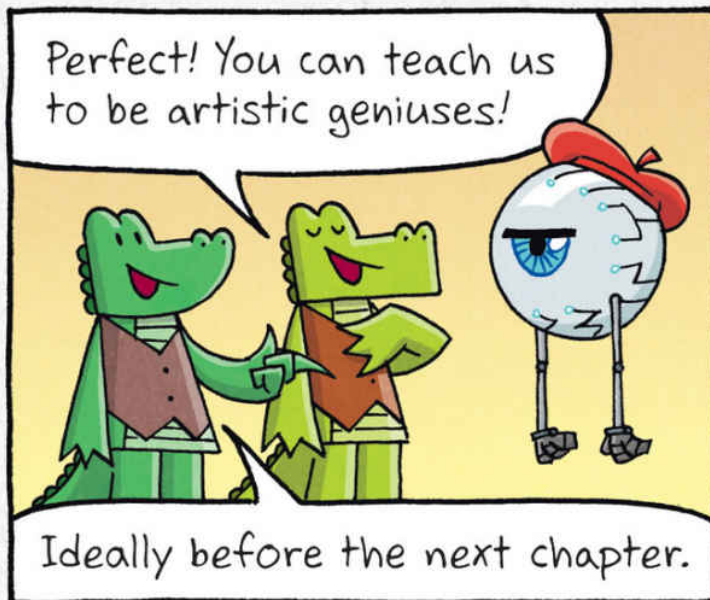
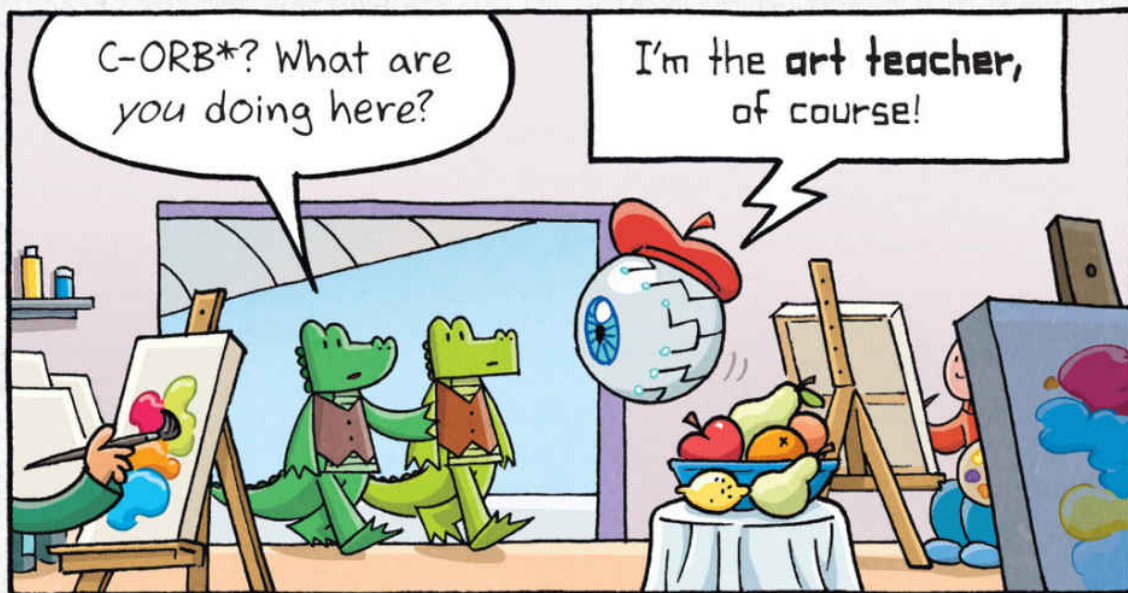










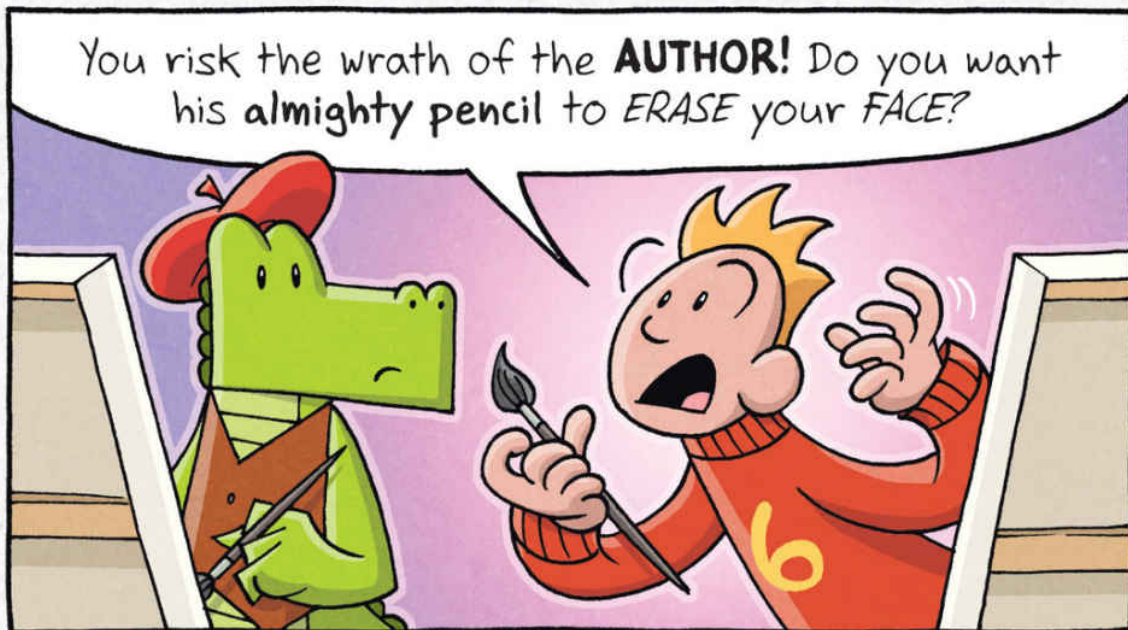


\*Computerized Ocular Remote Butler





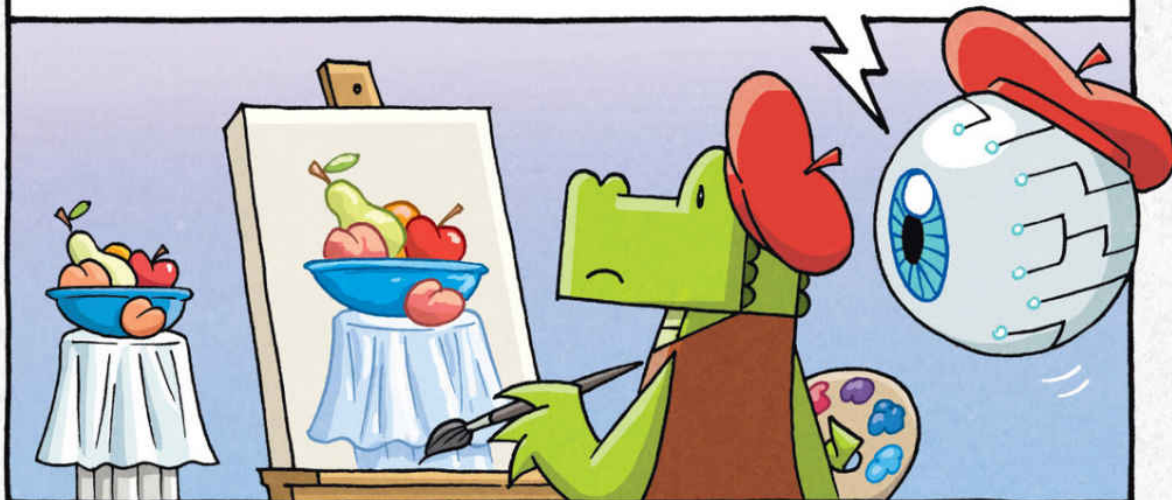






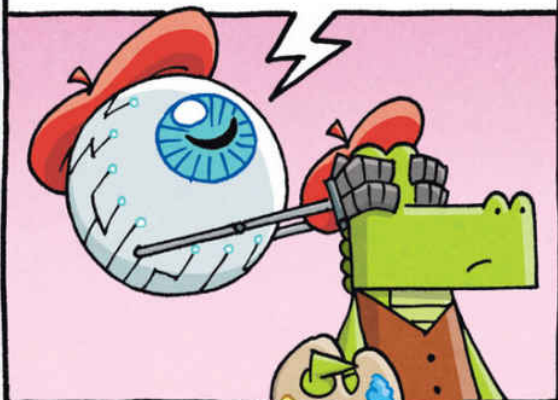


It's very...accurate. Literal. Realistic. But not something one might call *eye-catching*. It doesn't...**SAY** anything.

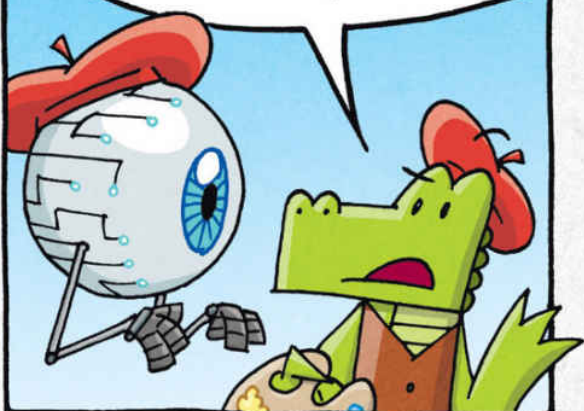




Don't just paint what you SEE. You must look with your **INNER EYE**.



That's easy for *YOU* to say. You're nothing *BUT* eye!

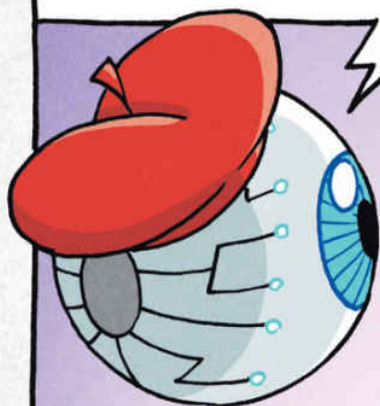


≡SNORTE≡ You said "butt eye."



Oh! Now *THIS* speaks to me.

It's so daring... So **RAW**. So full of **EMOTION!** *A TRUE MASTERPIECE!*



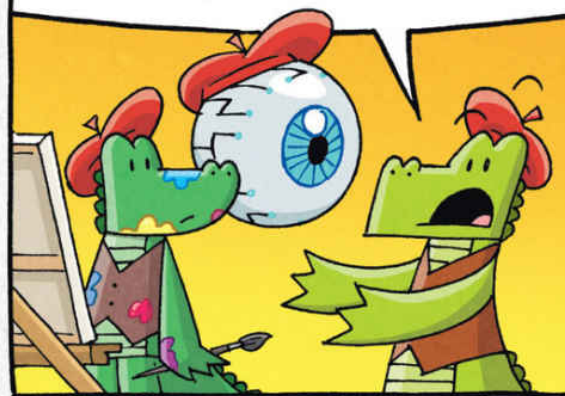
You really think so?







ARE YOU KIDDING ME?  
It looks like he just  
threw up on the canvas!



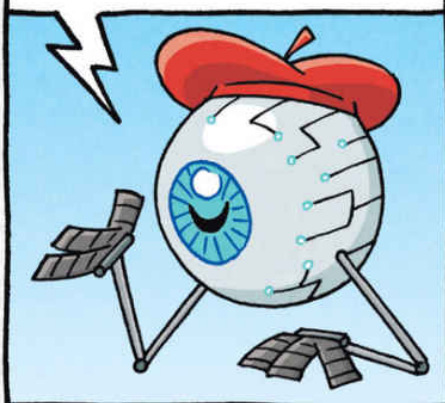
You're saying that  
painting is better  
than mine?



Well, *better* is a matter  
of opinion. But, YES.



And I should know.  
I have an **EYE** for  
talent!



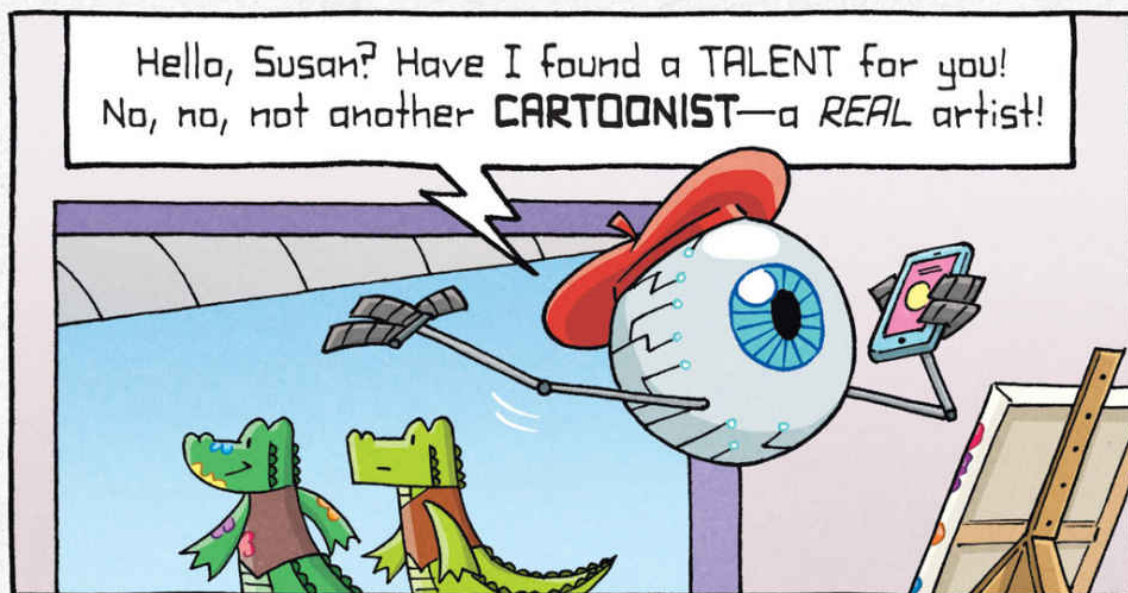
Now we just need to convince  
the curator of my artistic  
genius so he'll want my  
painting in the gala.





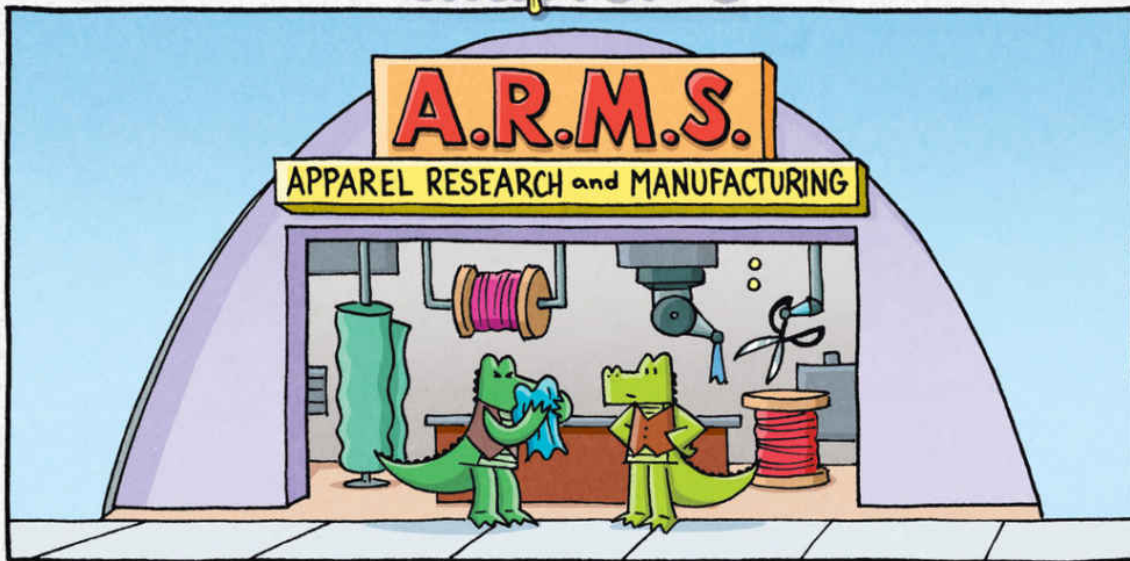








## Chapter 5



Sven is taking longer than usual.  
Your disguise must be some Very  
**COMPLICATED** Spy Technology!

V.C.S.T.? Doesn't  
exactly roll off  
the tongue.

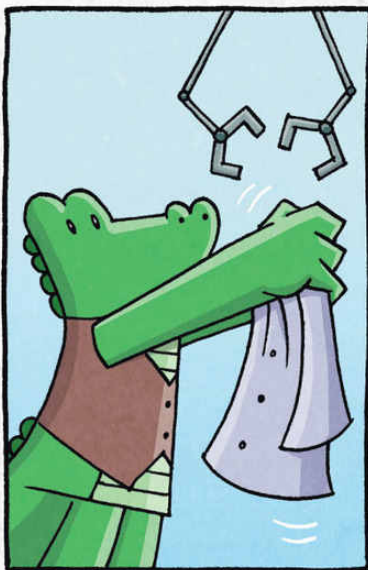
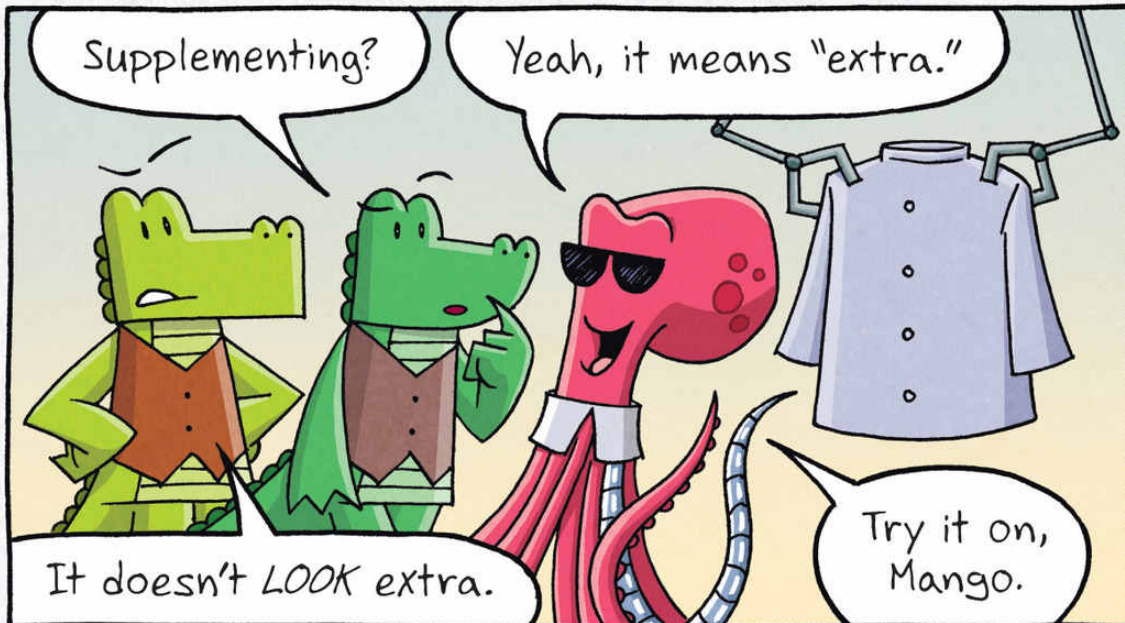
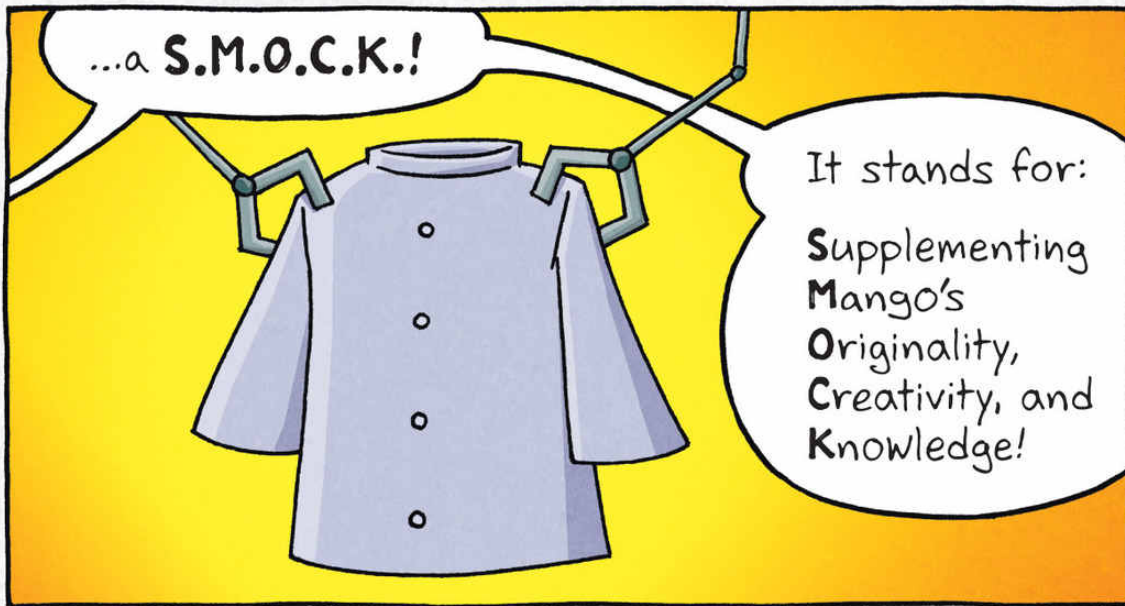


Ah,  
Sven!

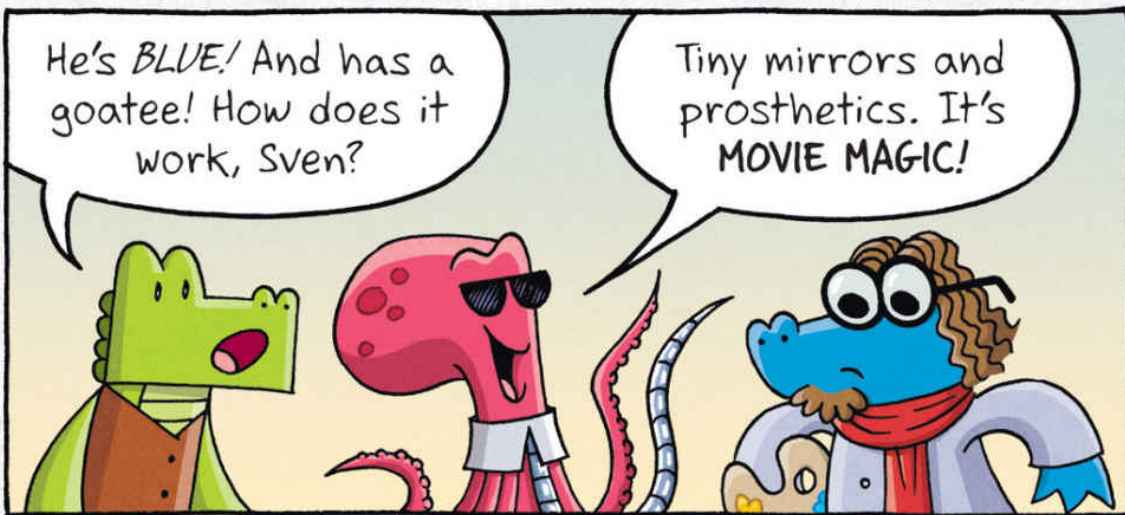
Sorry for the wait, Gators. Due to the  
unique requirements for Mango's disguise,  
instead of a V.E.S.T., I've come up with...













I feel like this case isn't simply black-and-white, but more akin to the classical technique of **chiaroscuro**, in which an artist, like myself, uses strong contrasts between light and dark through subtle gradations to convey form and dimension...

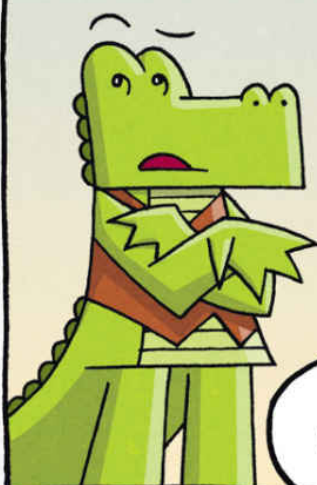


WOW! Brash! I finally understand color theory... composition...three-point perspective...



He's completely unrecognizable!

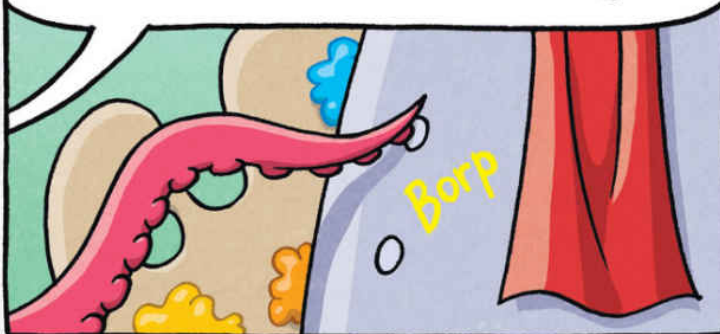
...and PAINT-BY-NUMBERS!



Well, almost unrecognizable.

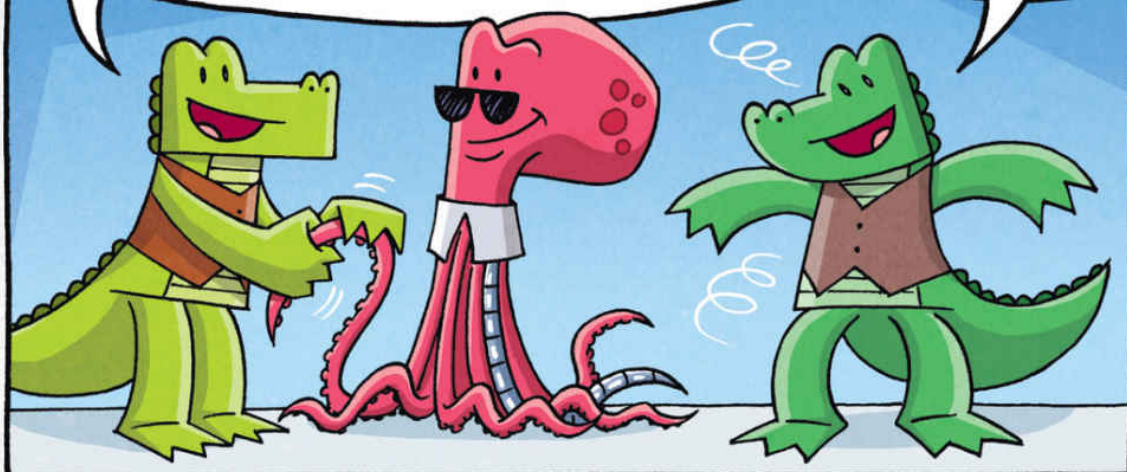


The best part is, the S.M.O.C.K. itself functions like **any other gadget**, so it can collapse into Mango's standard V.E.S.T. along with the rest of the usual gear.



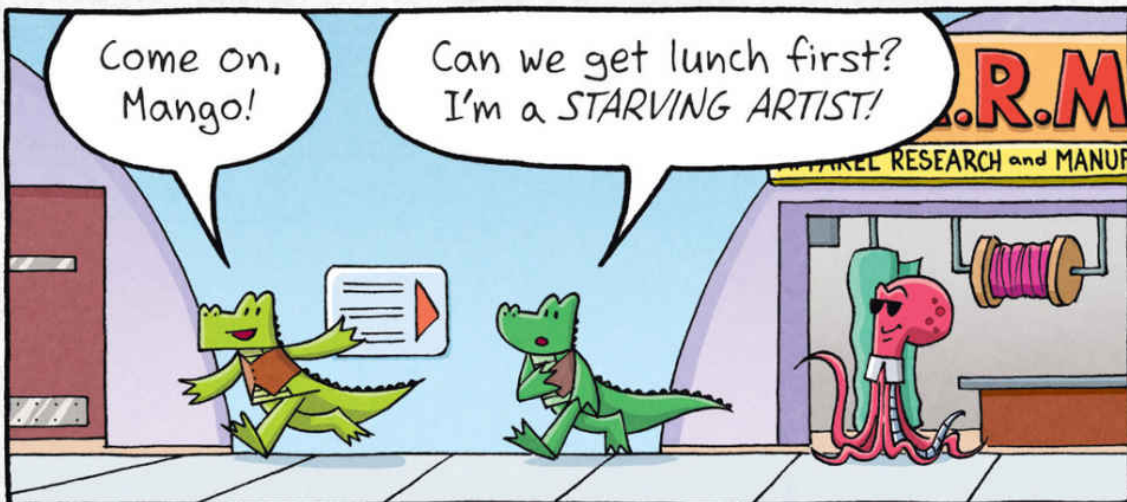
Great work, Sven. Now to introduce the fine art world to this **international artist extraordinaire!**

Compact!

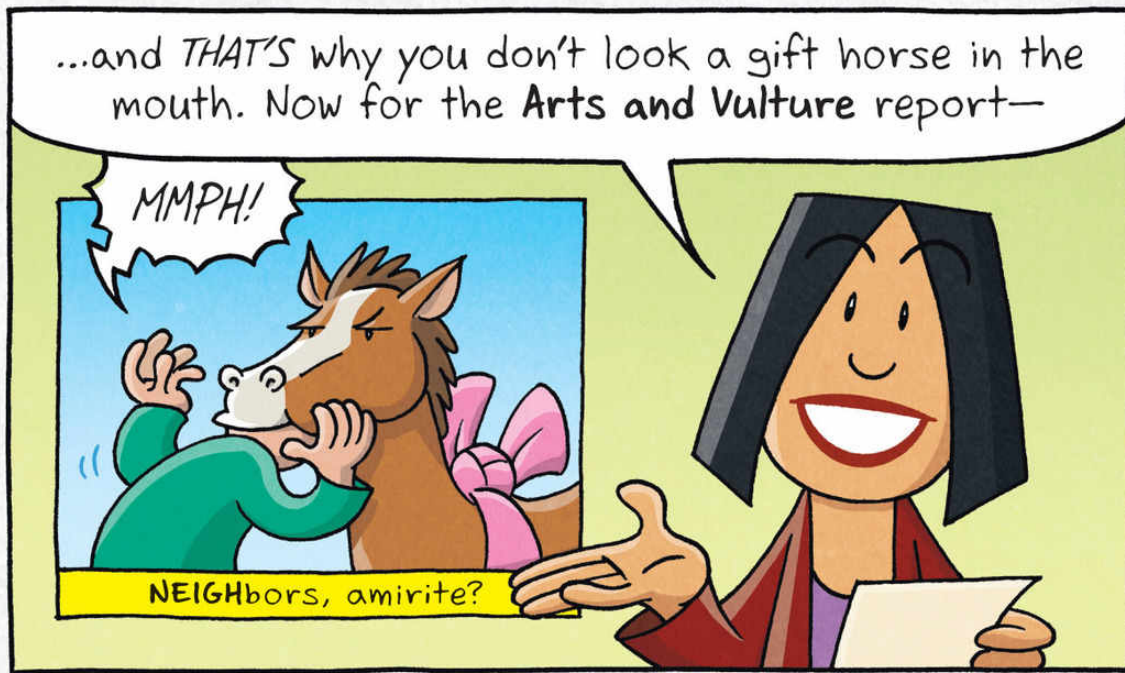


Come on, Mango!

Can we get lunch first?  
I'm a **STARVING ARTIST!**







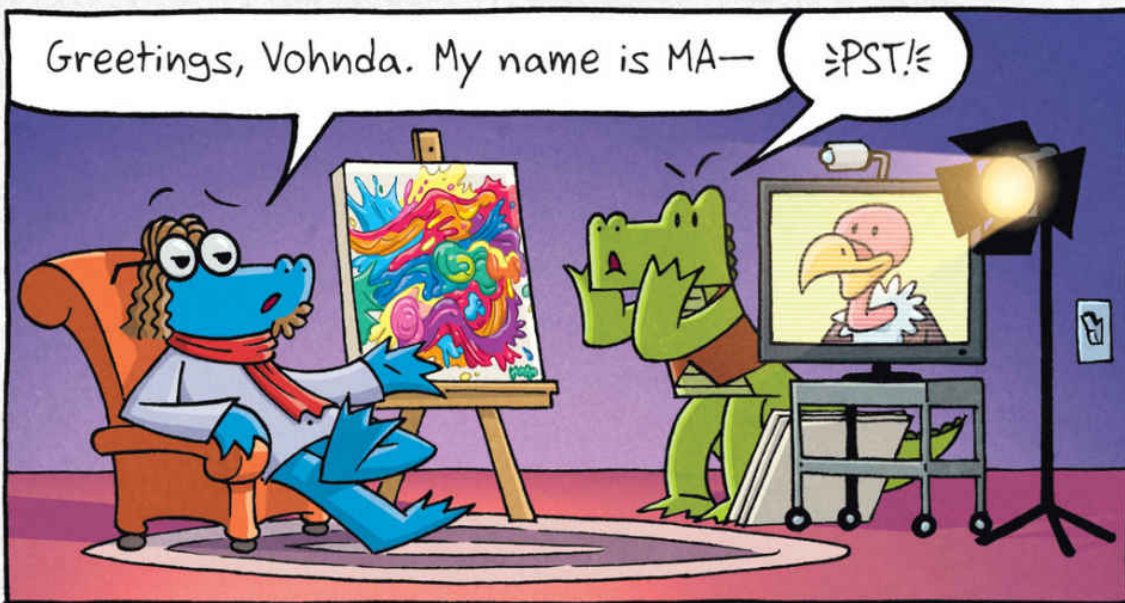


A previously unknown artistic genius has just emerged in the art world. SO unknown that I didn't even ask his name before booking this **exclusive remote interview!**



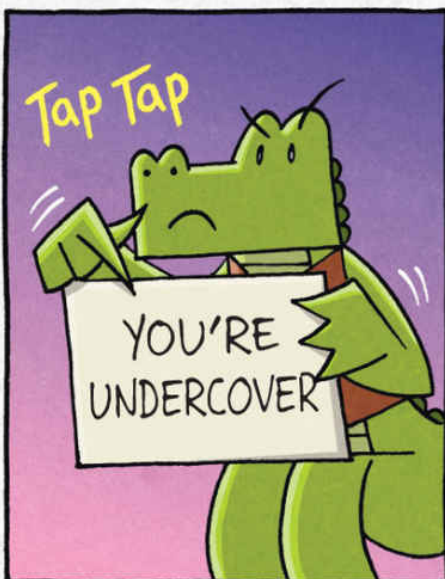
Greetings, Vohnda. My name is MA—

»PST!«



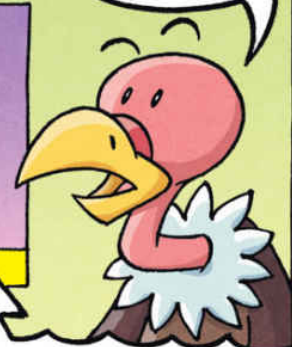
Tap Tap

YOU'RE  
UNDERCOVER



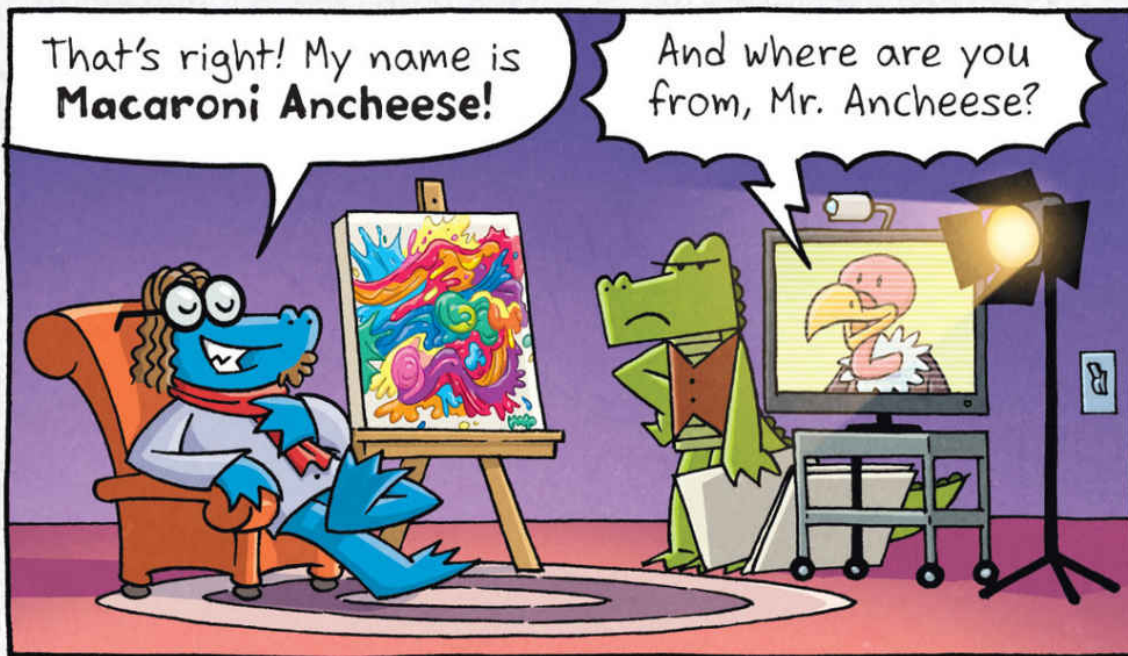
—AAAAAcaroni...

Macaroni  
what?

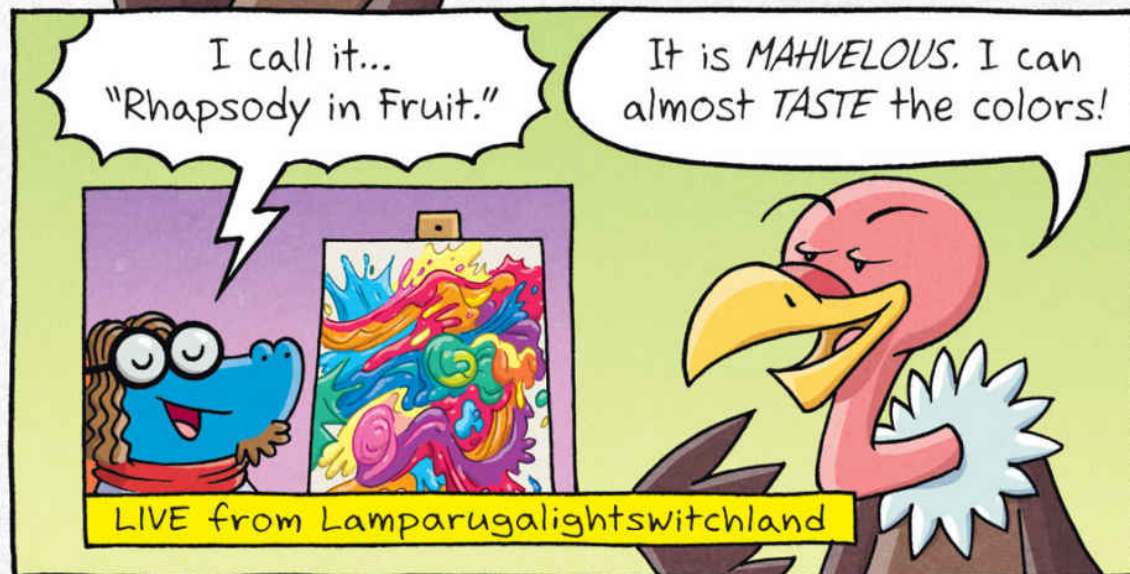
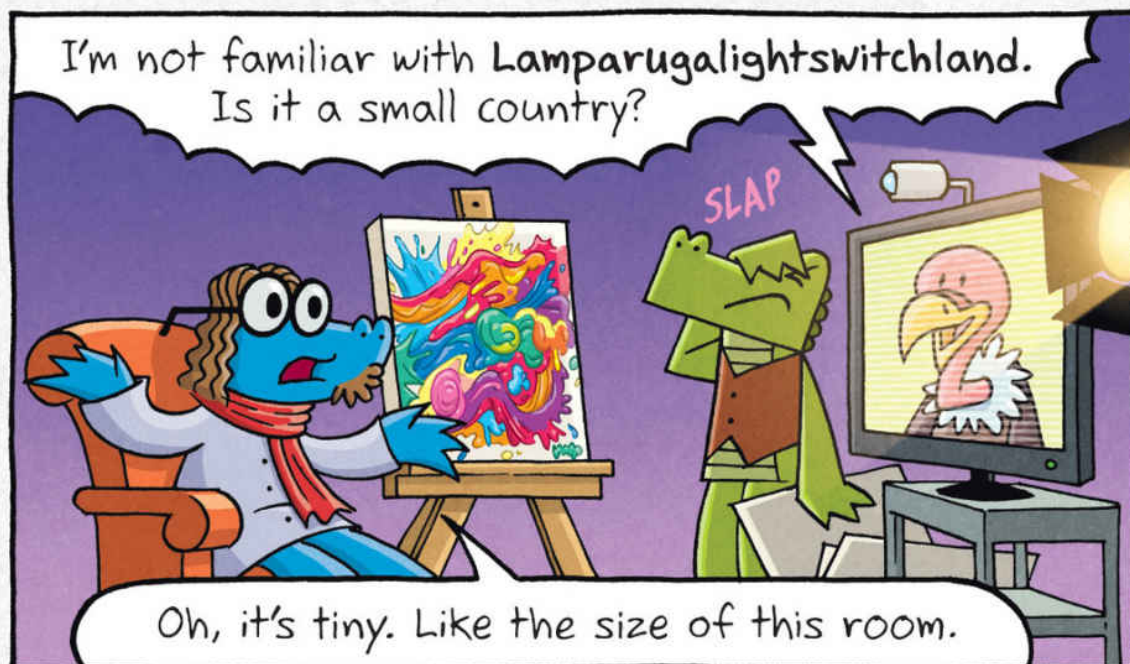


Macaroniiiiii...aaaaaan' cheese?

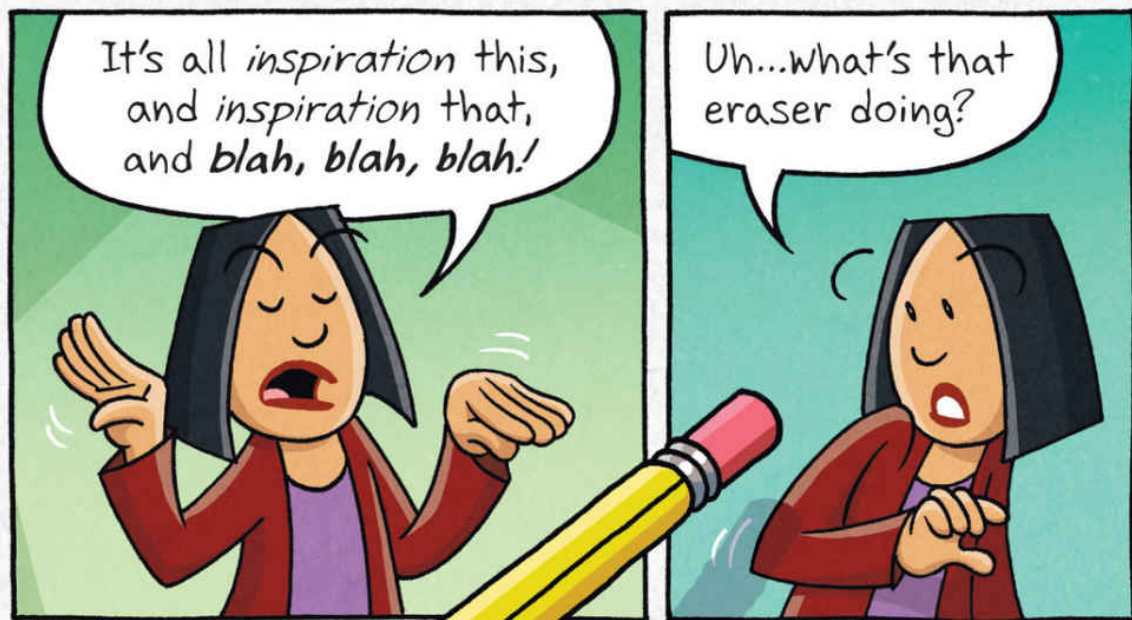






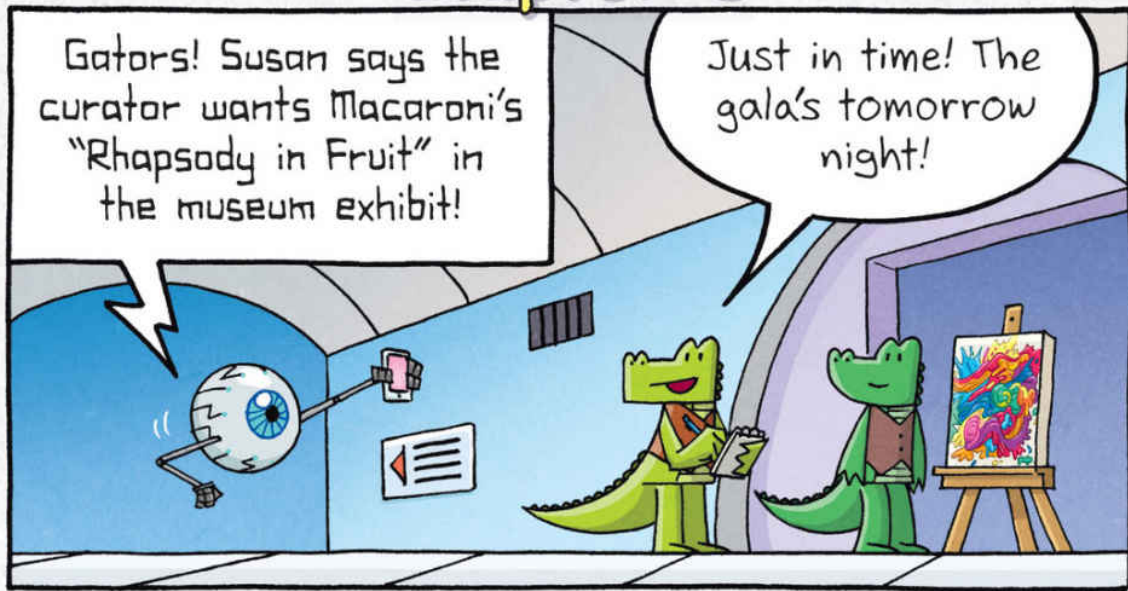








## Chapter 6





Perfect! We're on the last step to solve this case and we're not even halfway through the book!

Maybe this time there'll even be room for a "How to Draw" section.

What are you doing, Mango?

I'm calibrating this **tracking device** to detect wherever my painting is.

If we catch the thief in the act of stealing *THIS* painting, they still might not reveal *WHERE* they've hidden the *OTHER* paintings they've stolen.

Hmm, good point.



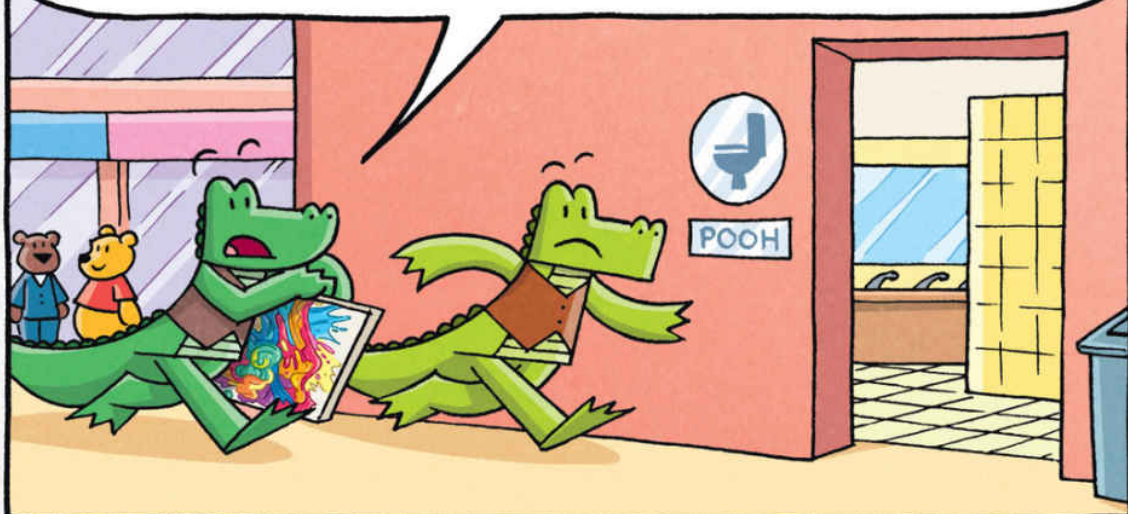








It's a good thing we showed up **four hours early**, like the TSA recommends for international flights.

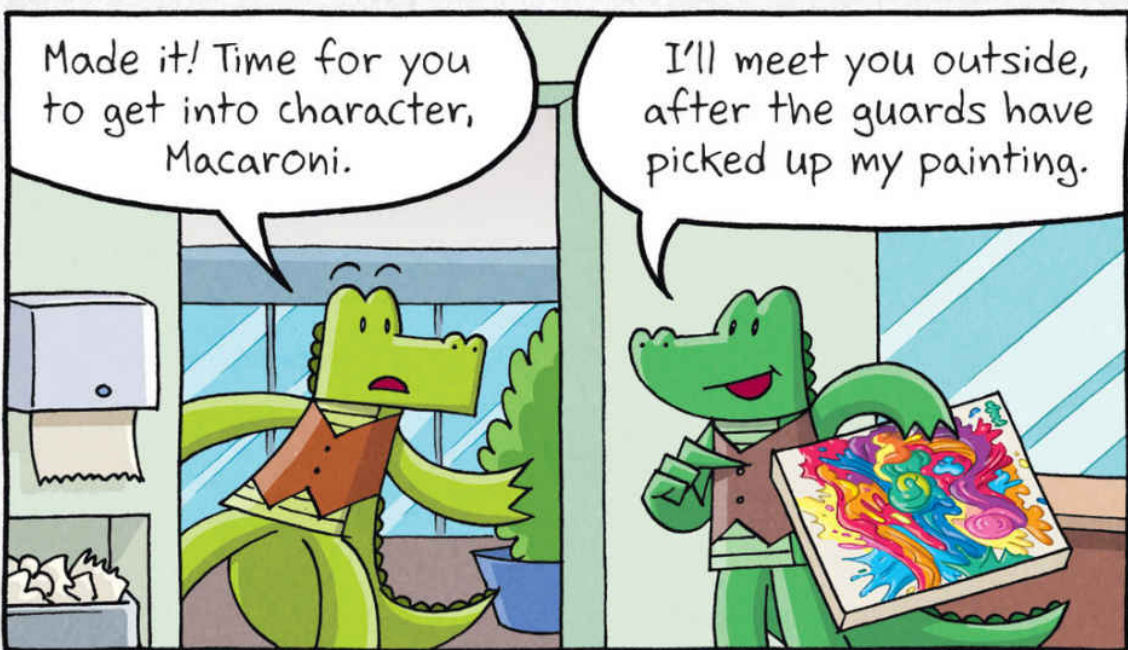


At the **ACTUAL** airport...



Made it! Time for you to get into character, Macaroni.

I'll meet you outside, after the guards have picked up my painting.











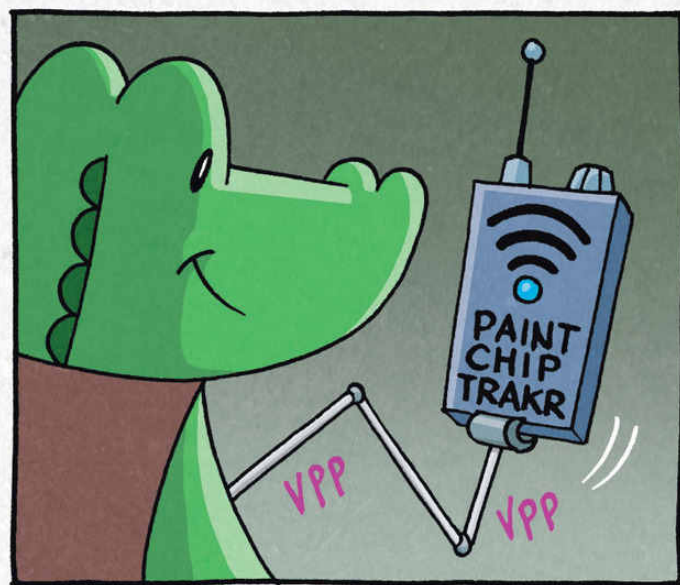
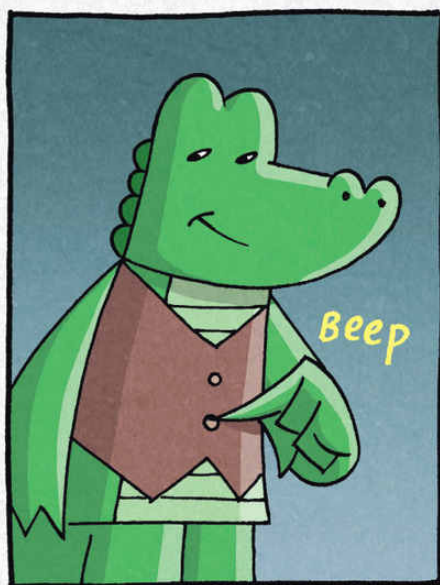
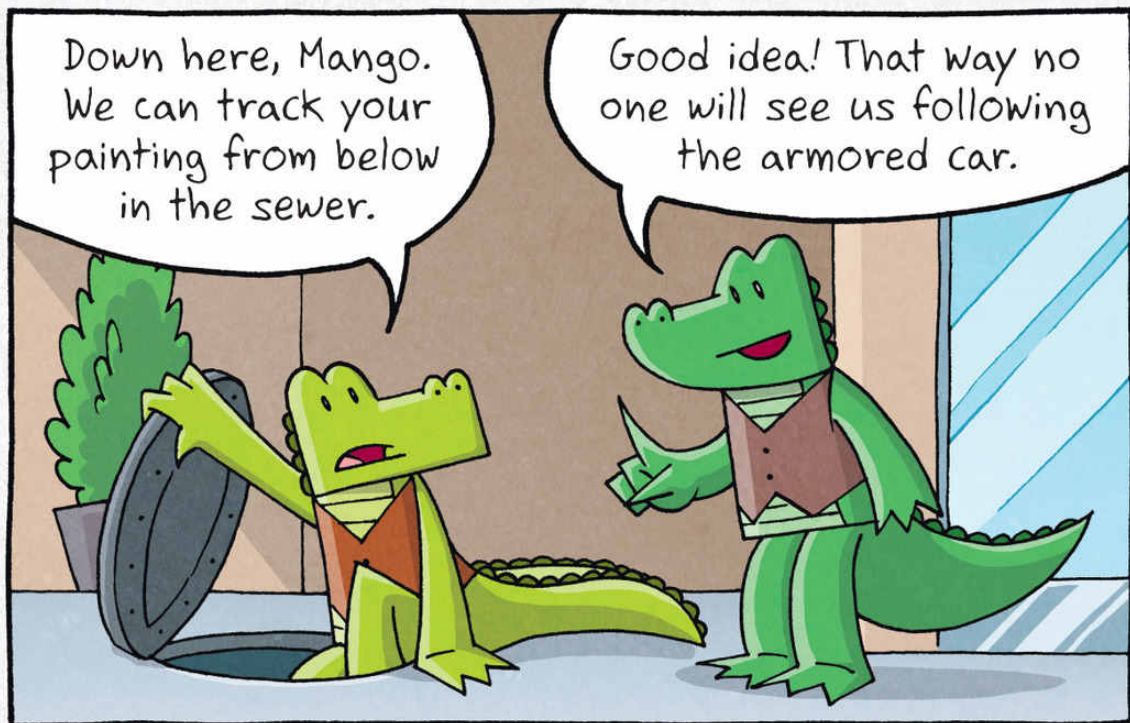




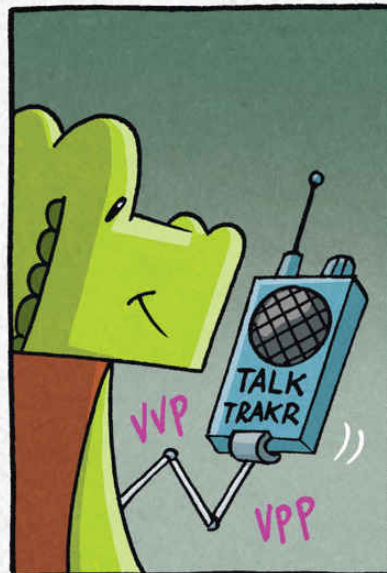
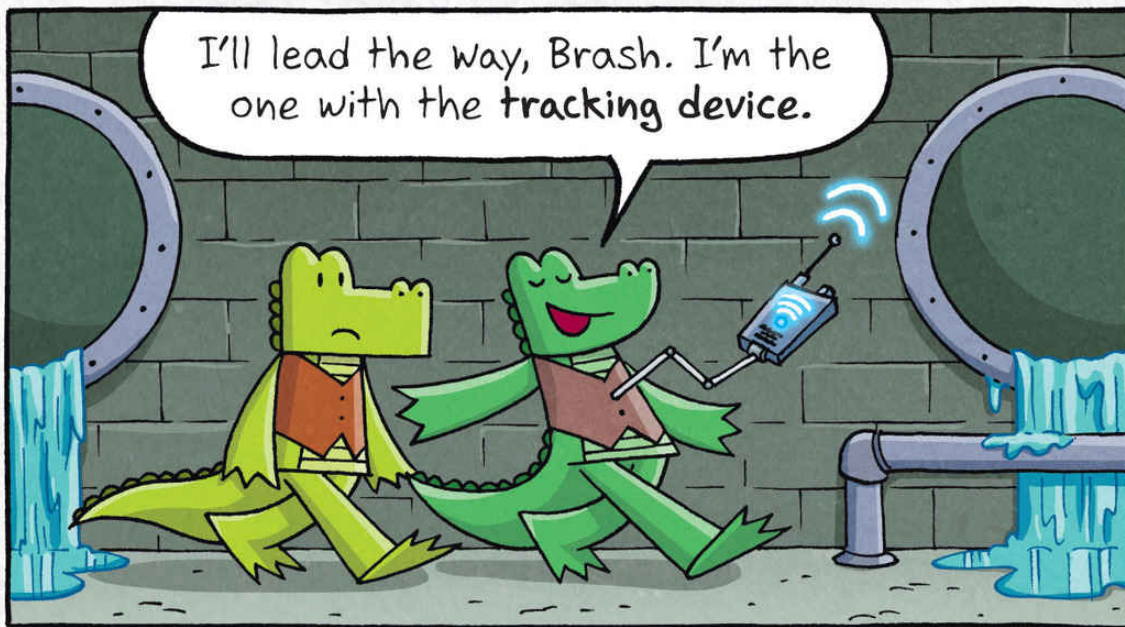
Zep  
Zop  
Zip



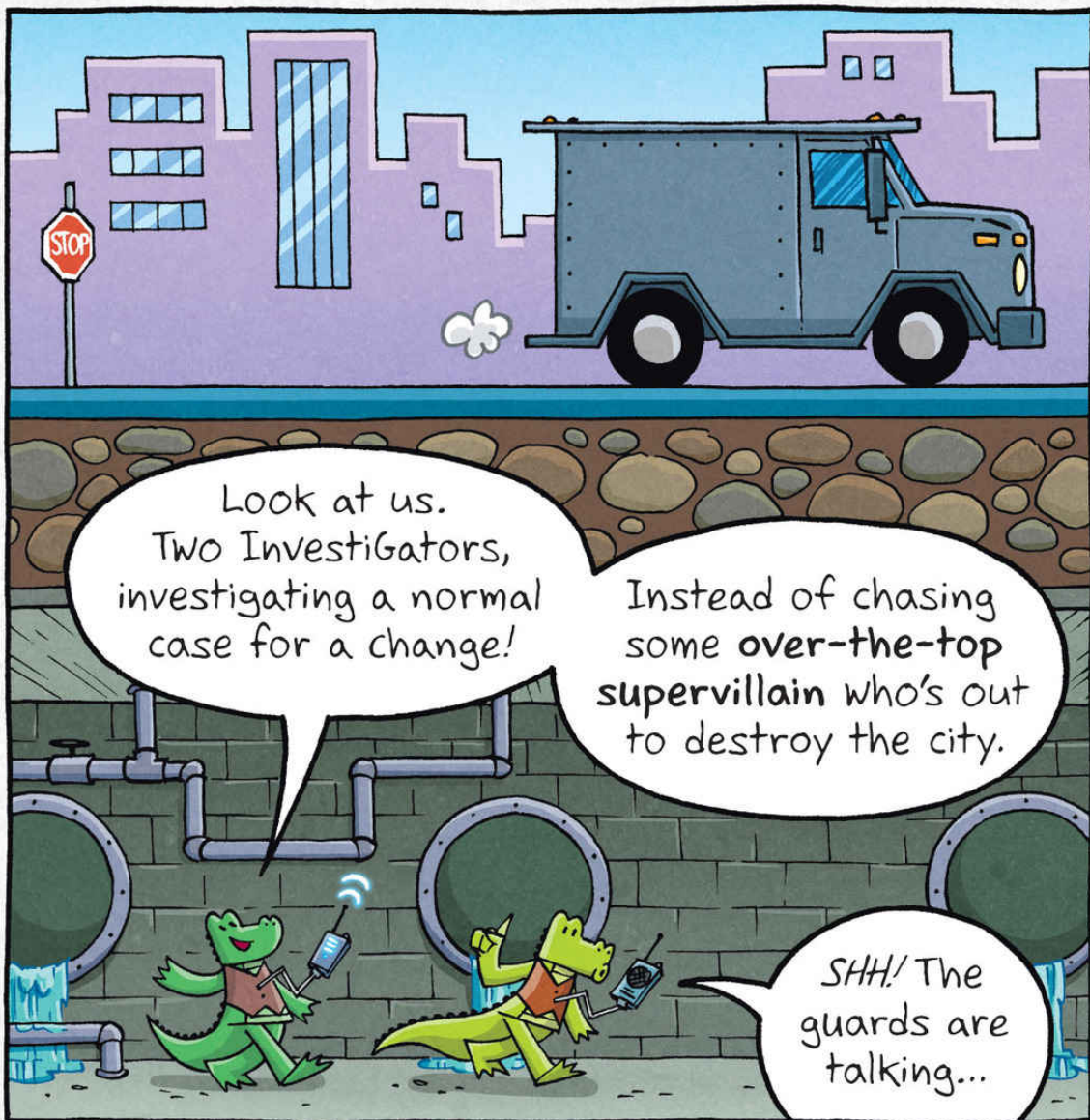




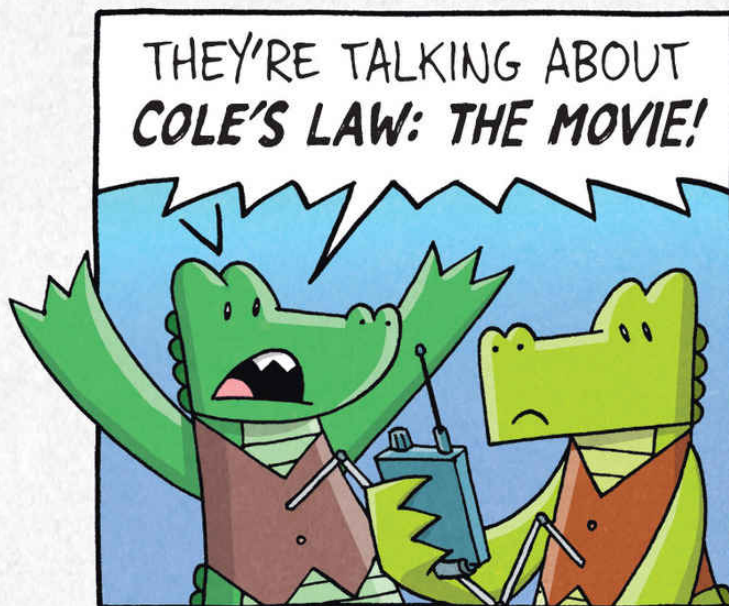




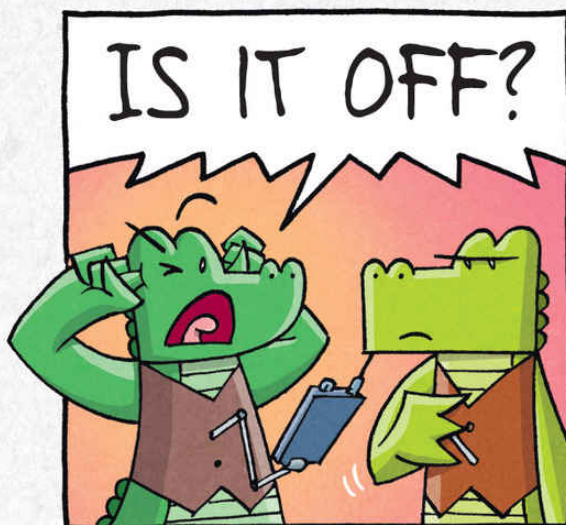






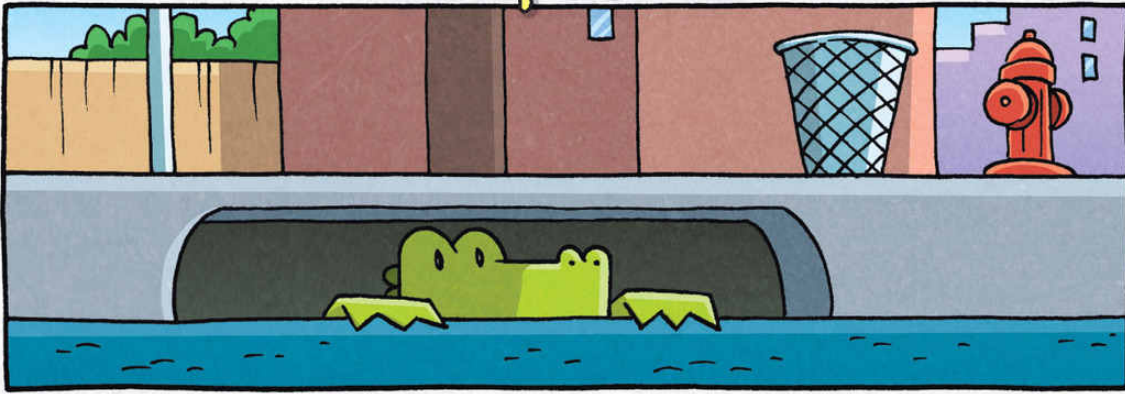








## Chapter 7



The armored car is about a block away.

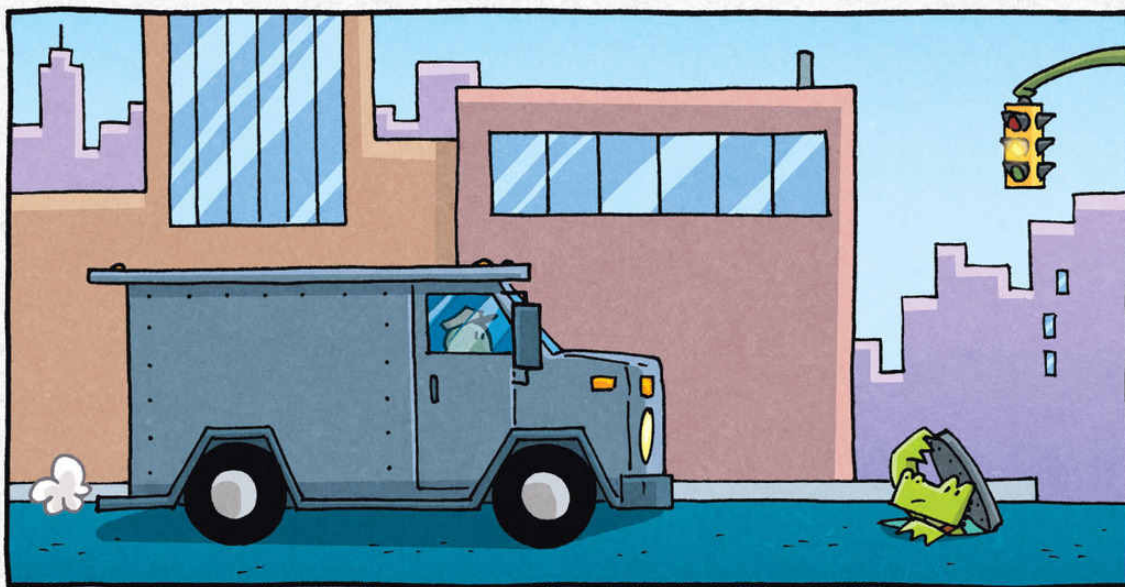
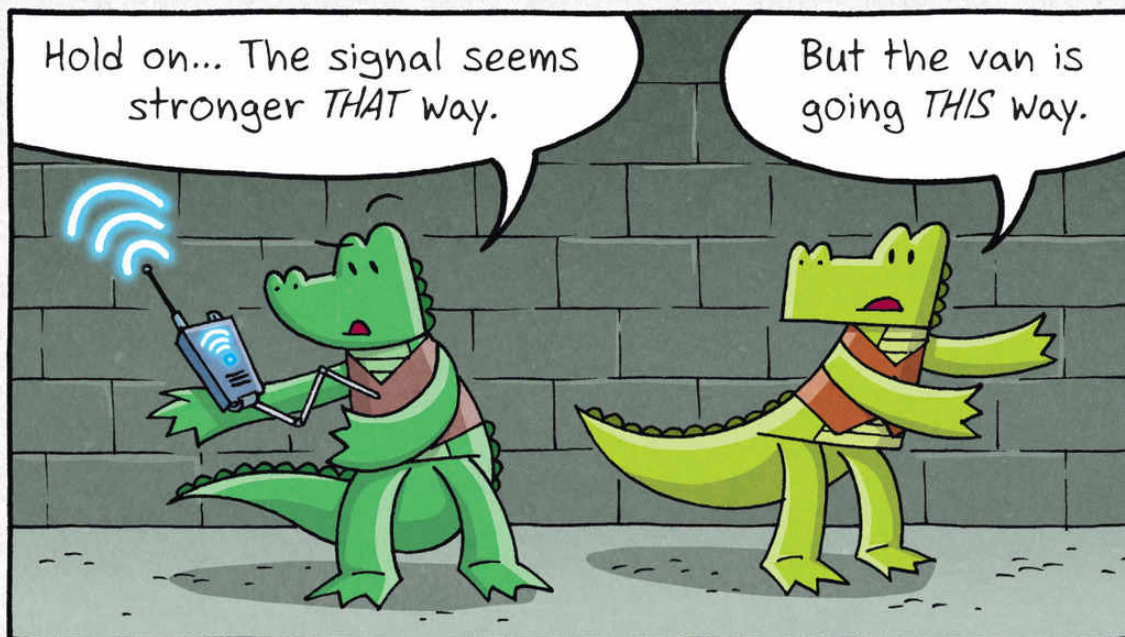


It's still heading toward the museum. Is your canvas still in the back?

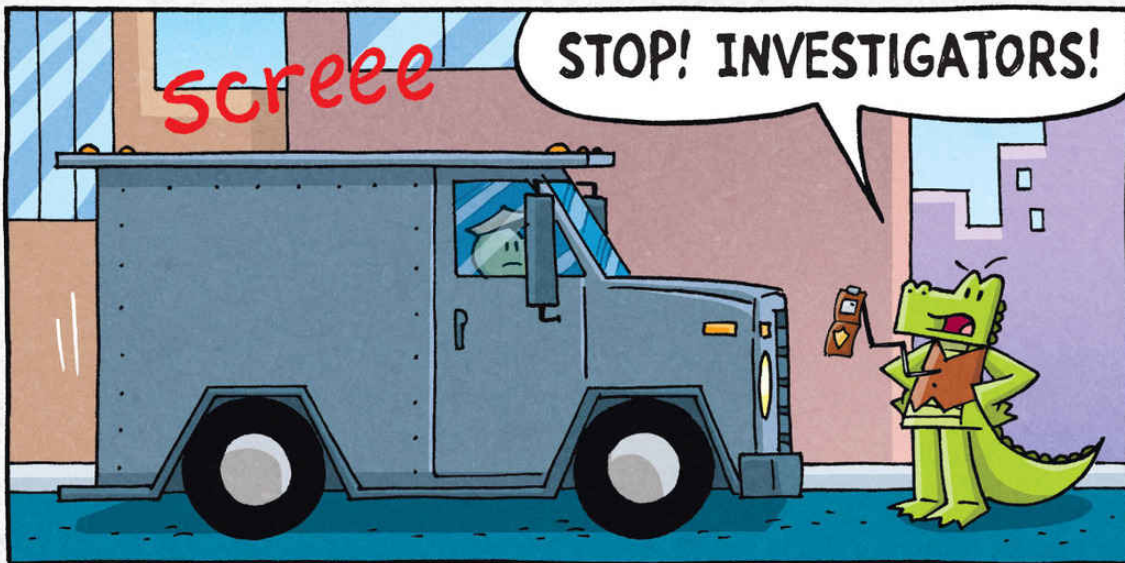
As far as I can tell.



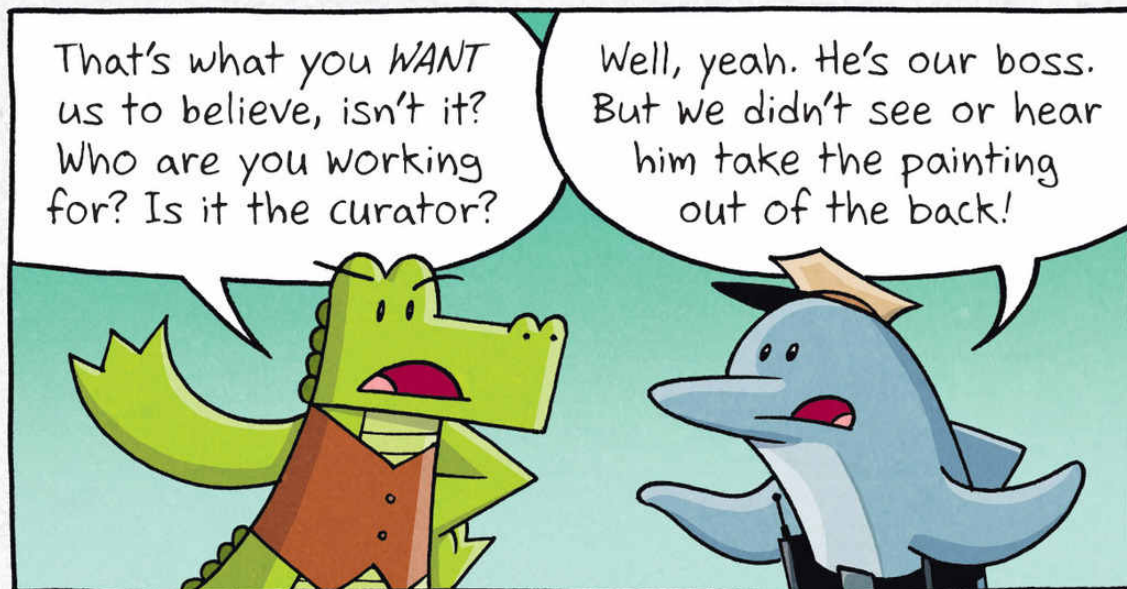












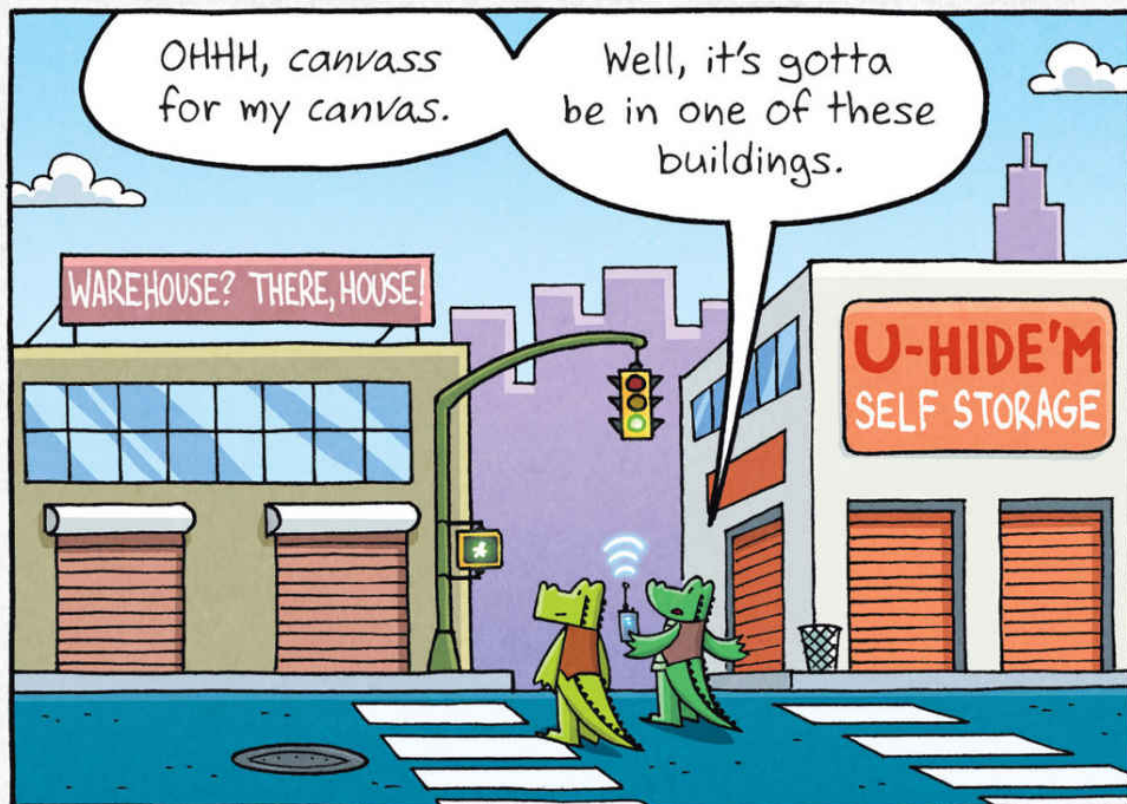




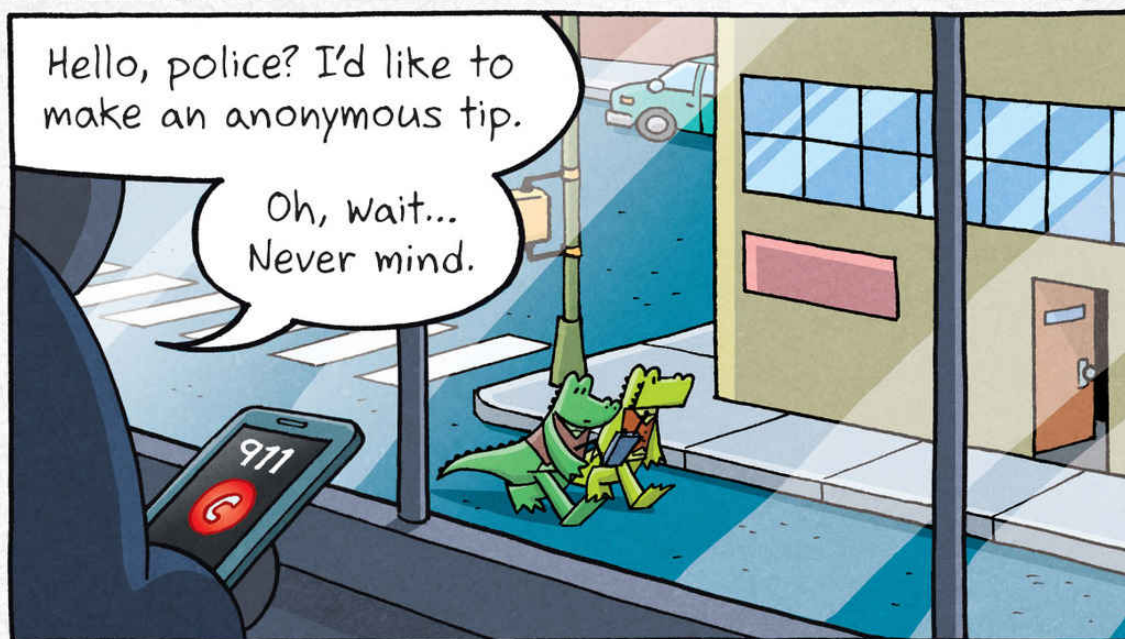








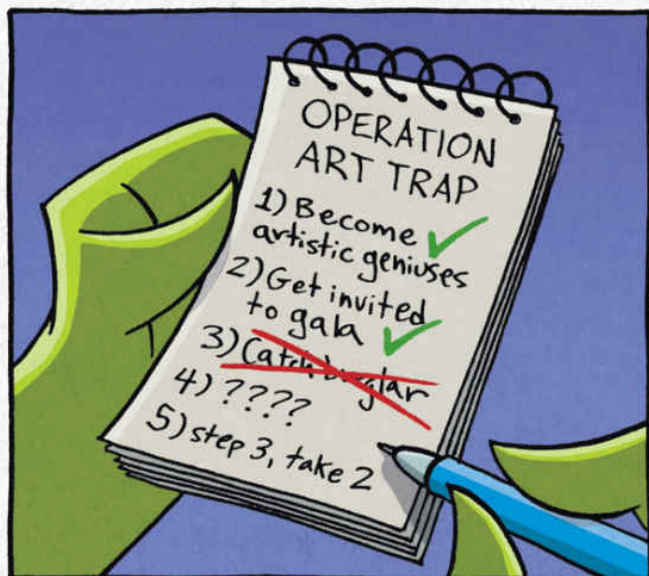


















## Chapter 8

At the CORRECT museum...



When T and P returned with yet another empty armored car, I feared the worst. But you've found *all* the missing paintings, just in time for the gala! I won't have to cancel it after all!



We would've been here sooner, but we went to the **UDDER** museum.



We **HERD** they had an impressive **CATTLE**-log. It was quite **MOO**-ving.



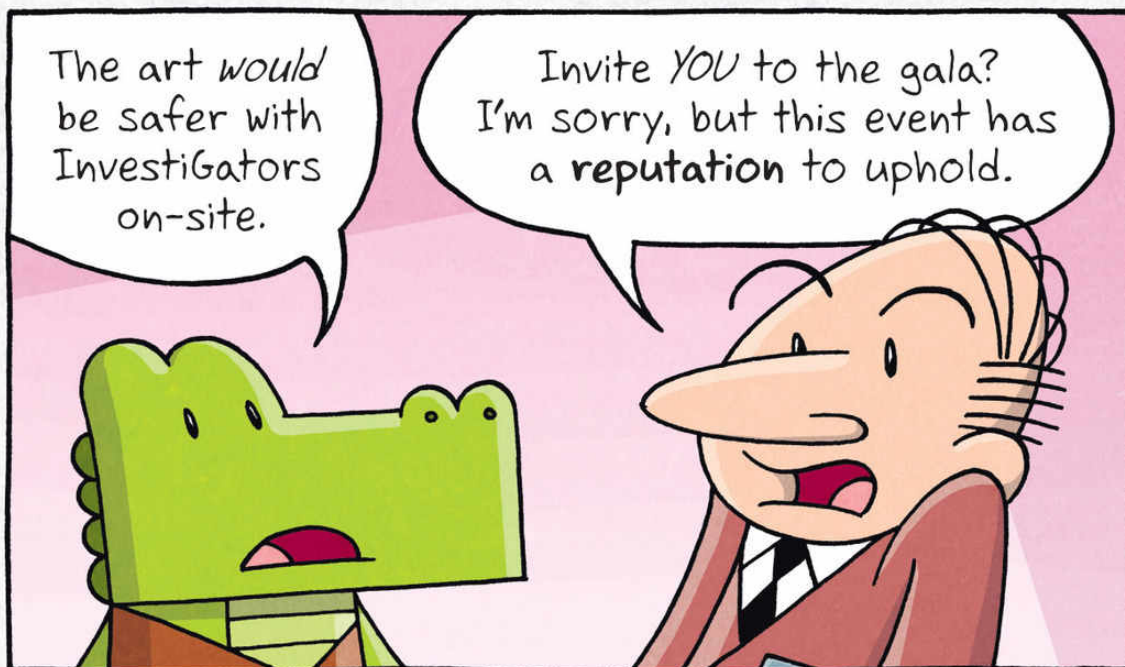














Only the **brightest minds**, most famous celebrities, richest moguls, and most prominent influencers are invited! And of course those clowns from the city council.

As grateful as the museum is that you found the art, your services are no longer required.



And what about the thief?

Well, they're not invited, either, obviously!

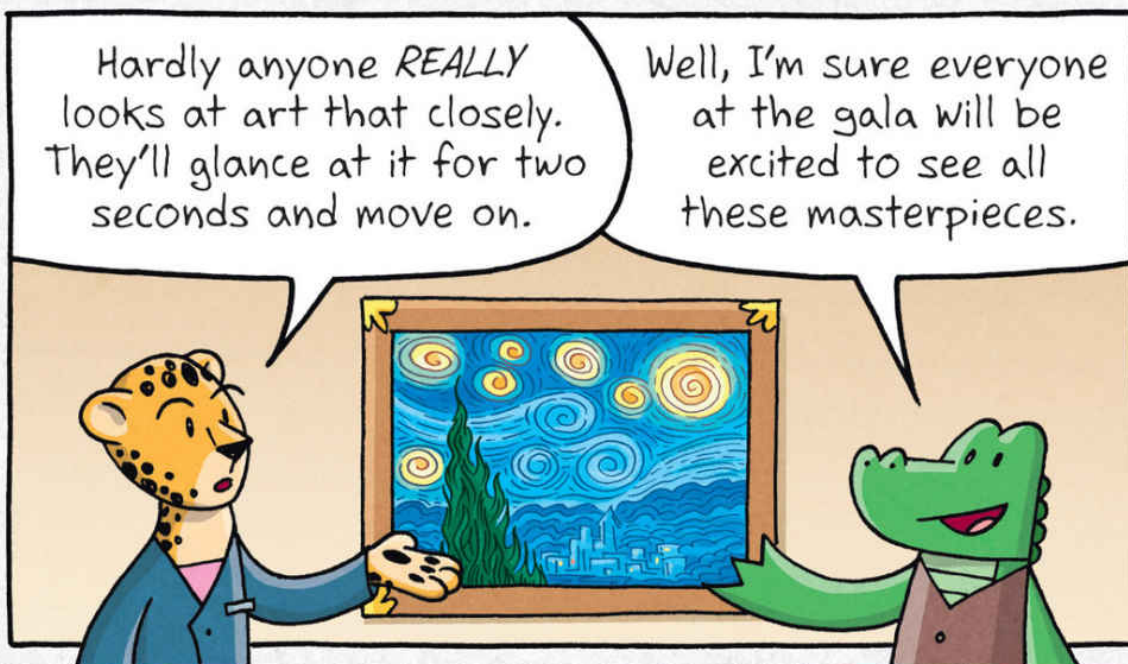
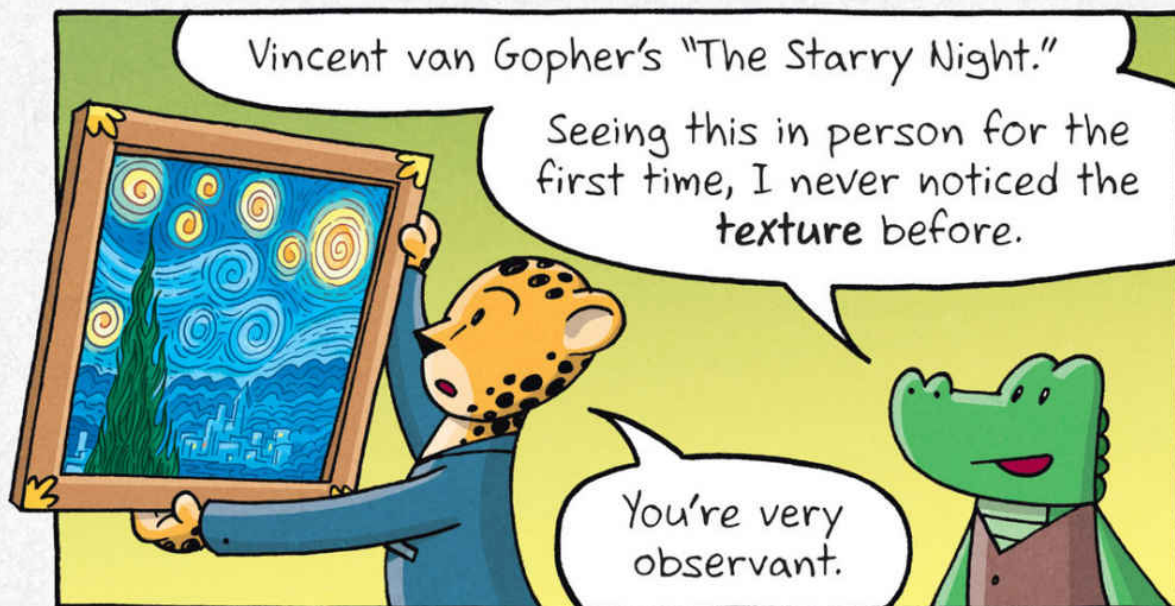


Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a lot of work to do.

People don't just come to the museum for the *VIEW*, you know.









Sadly, all the best artists were not appreciated in their lifetimes.

Modern artists don't have any *discipline*. They'd rather make art into a joke.

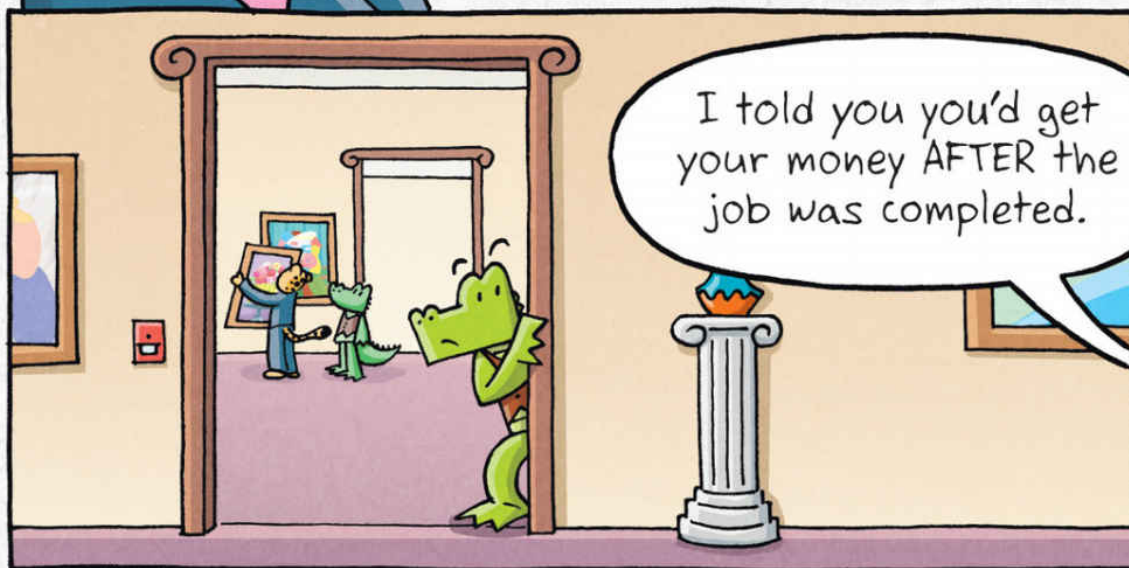
Like that Panksy.



More like **PRANK**sy! His idea of art is replacing the water in the park fountain with *prune juice*!



You got Panksy'd!



I told you you'd get your money **AFTER** the job was completed.















## Chapter 9



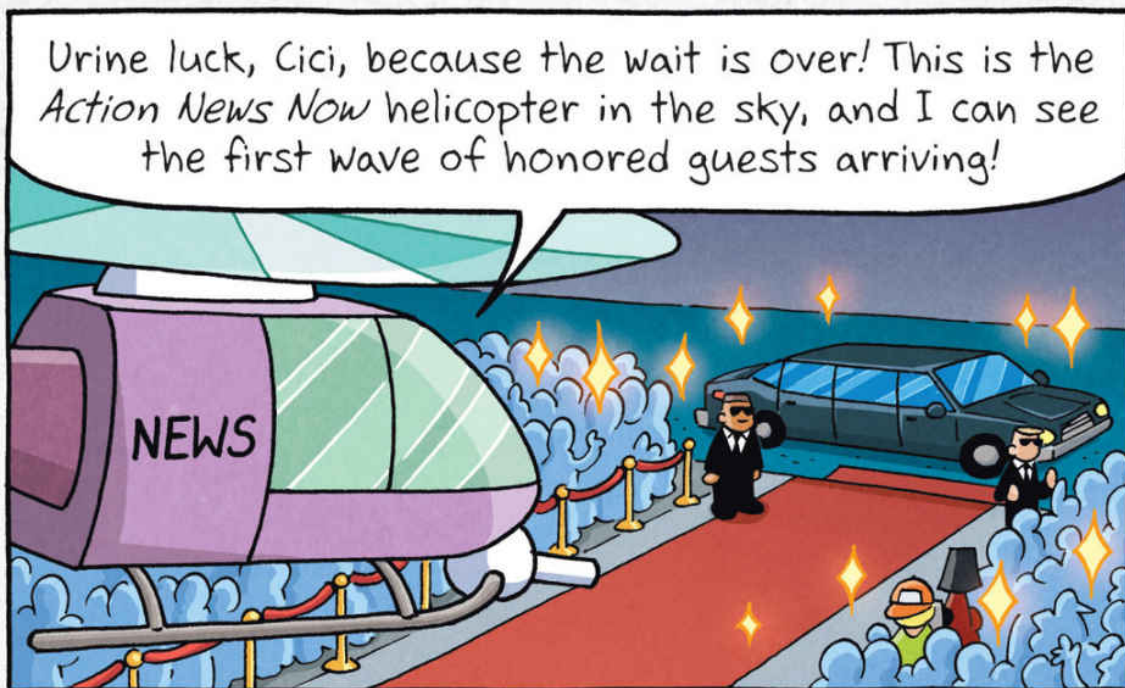
This is Cici Boringstories with *Action News Now*, reporting LIVE from outside the city Art Museum Gala! I'm filling in for Vohnda, the Culture Vulture, who's out sick with *avian flu*.



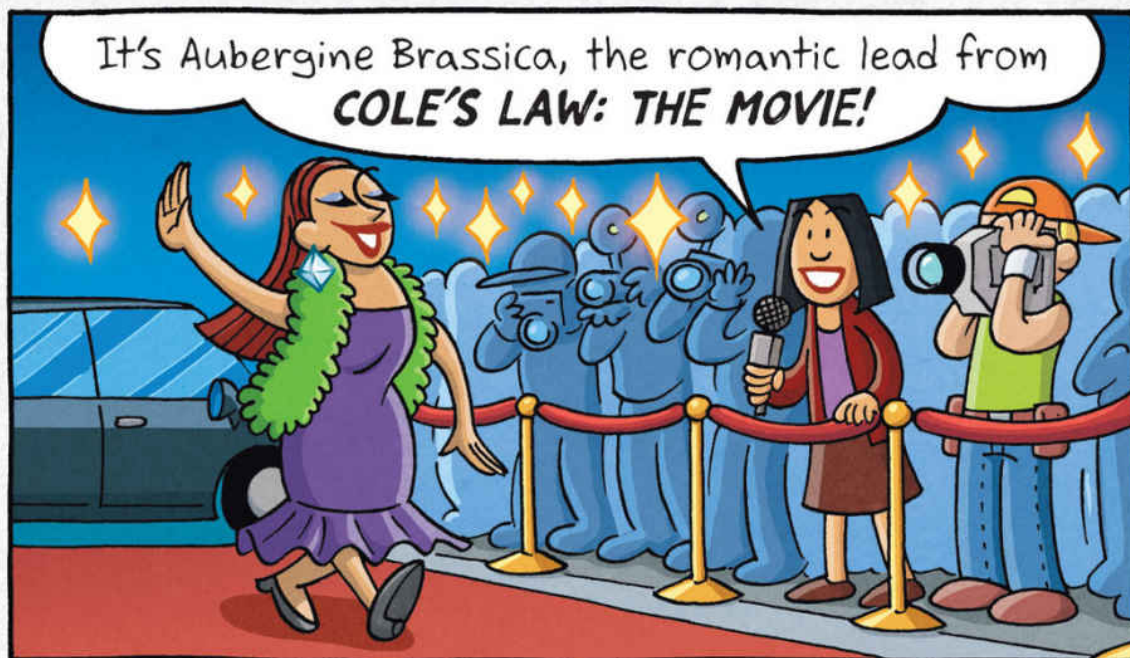
I don't care much for *boring old art*, but I'll never pass up an opportunity for *celebrity gawking*. Catching a glimpse of a famous face is quite a competition amongst the *paparazzi*!



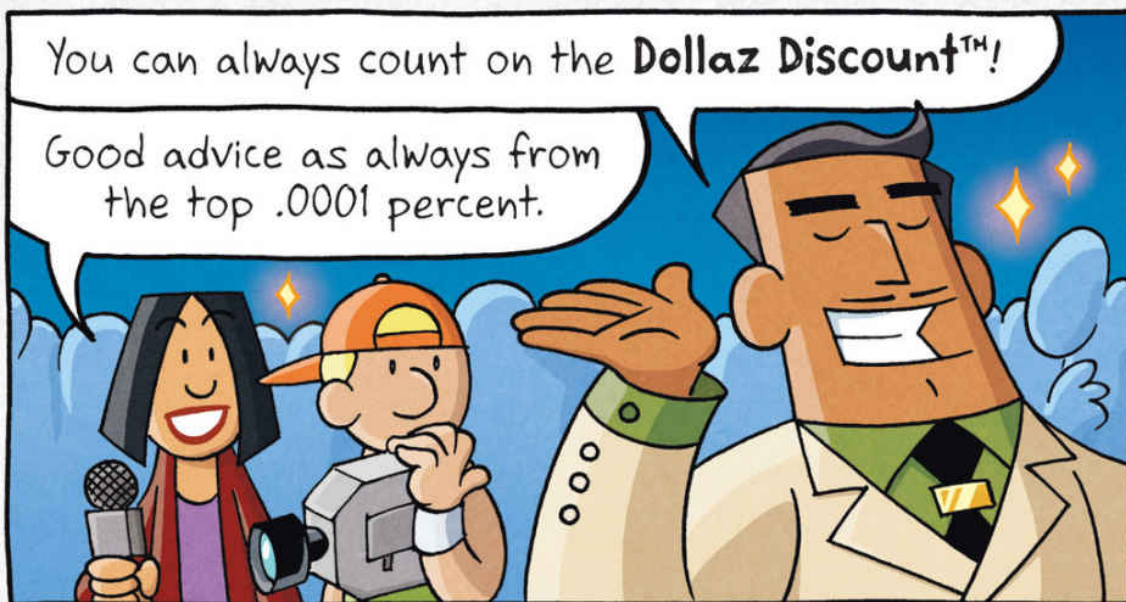








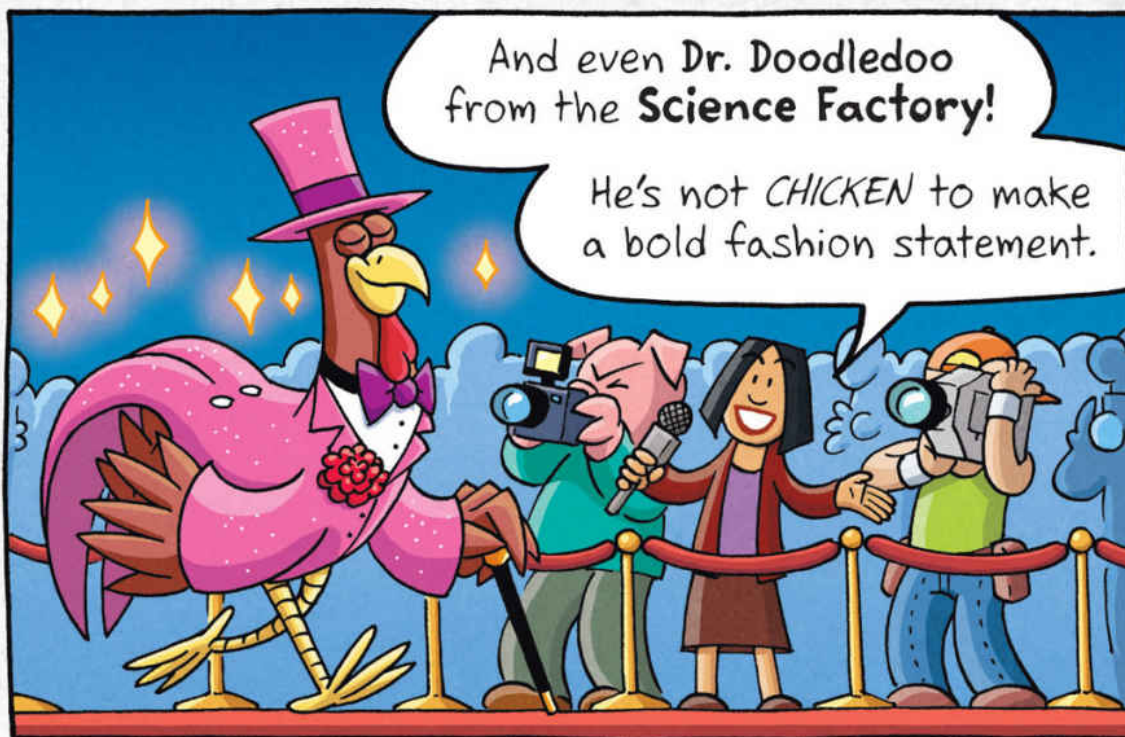








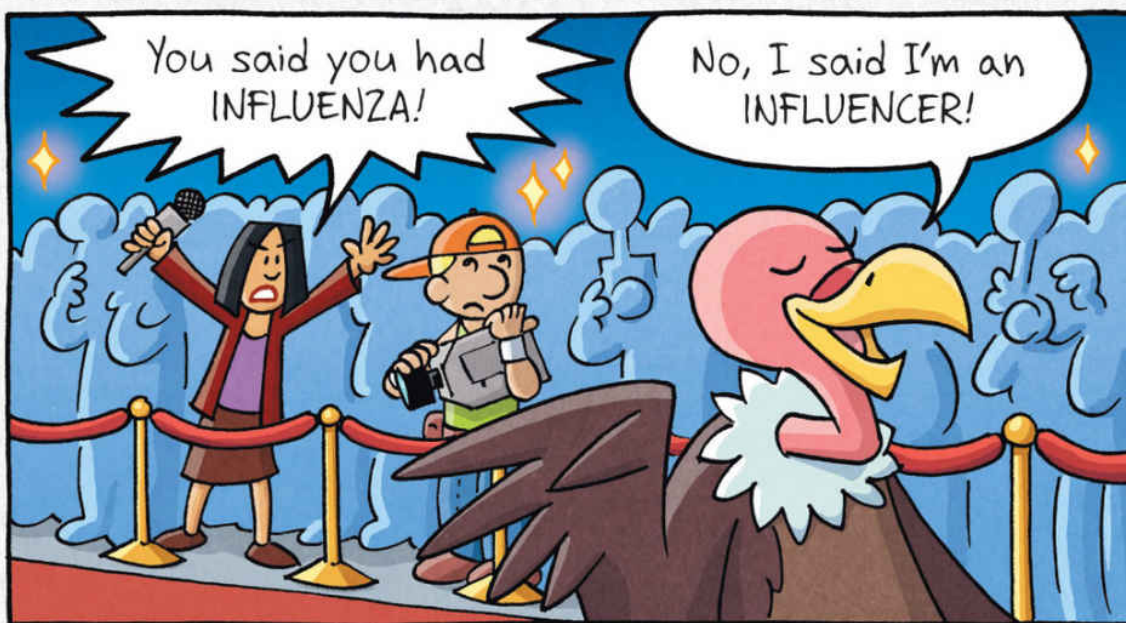




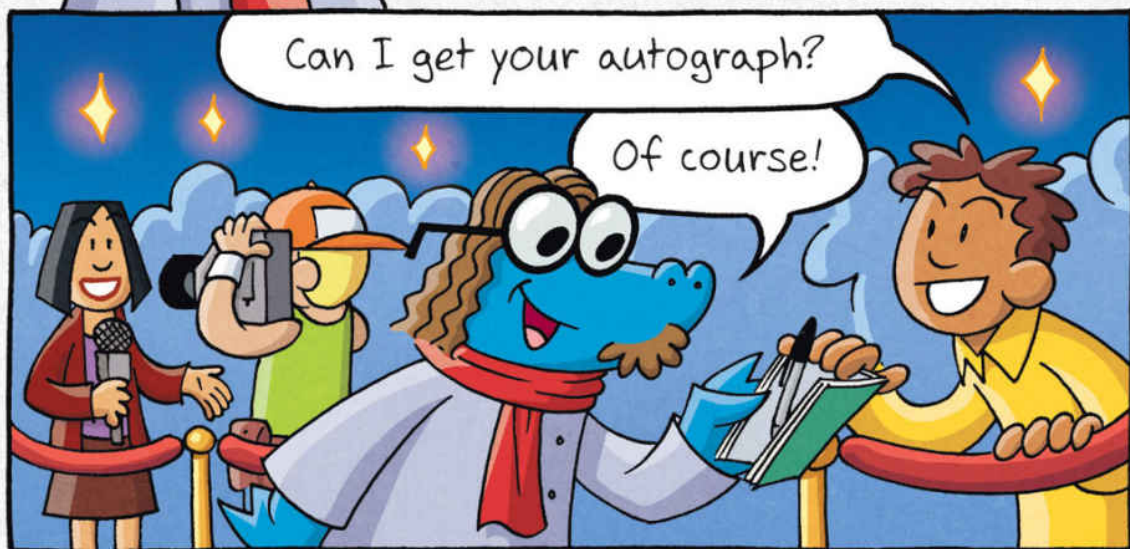
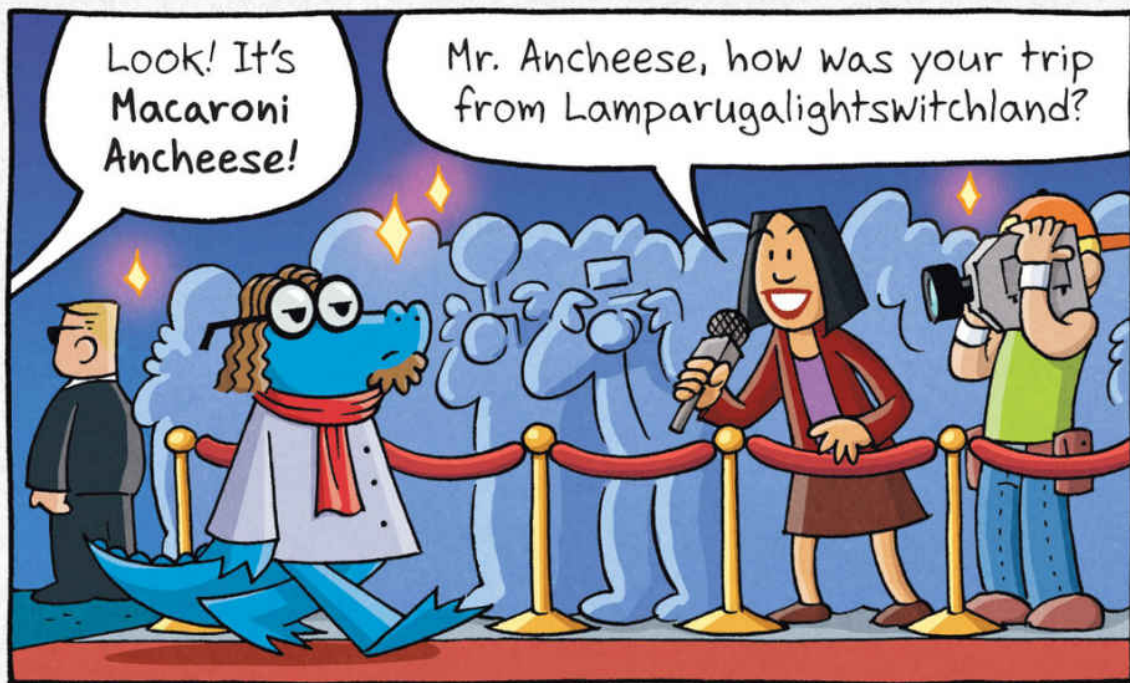




















Wow, look at all the people. And the *detail*! Now that I'm an artist, I can appreciate just how much work goes into drawing a page like this.

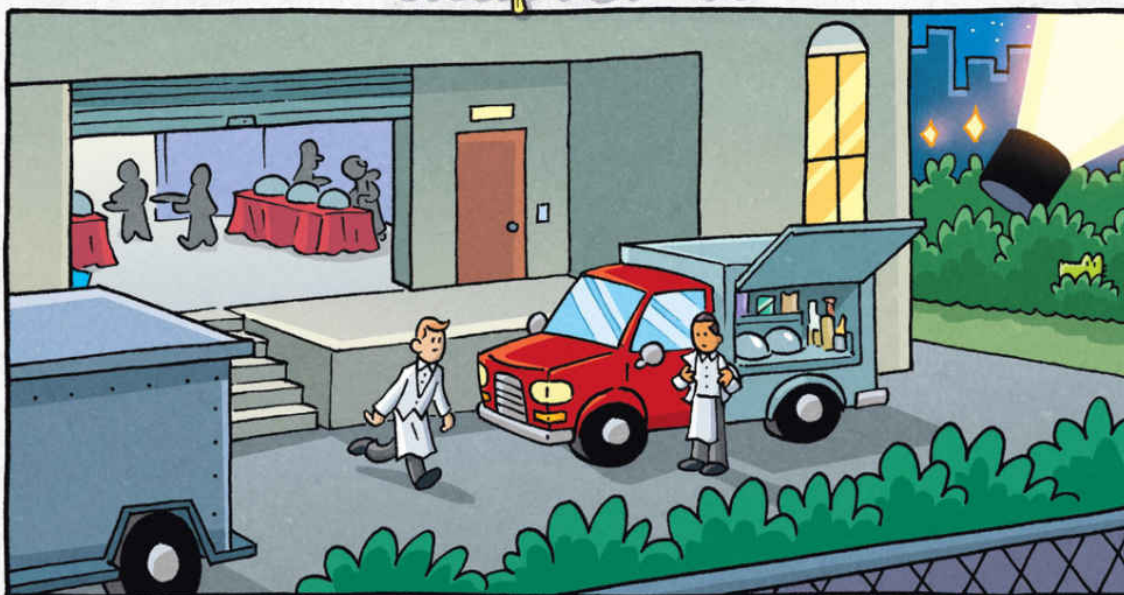


I hope the scene of Brash sneaking into the gala is easier to draw.

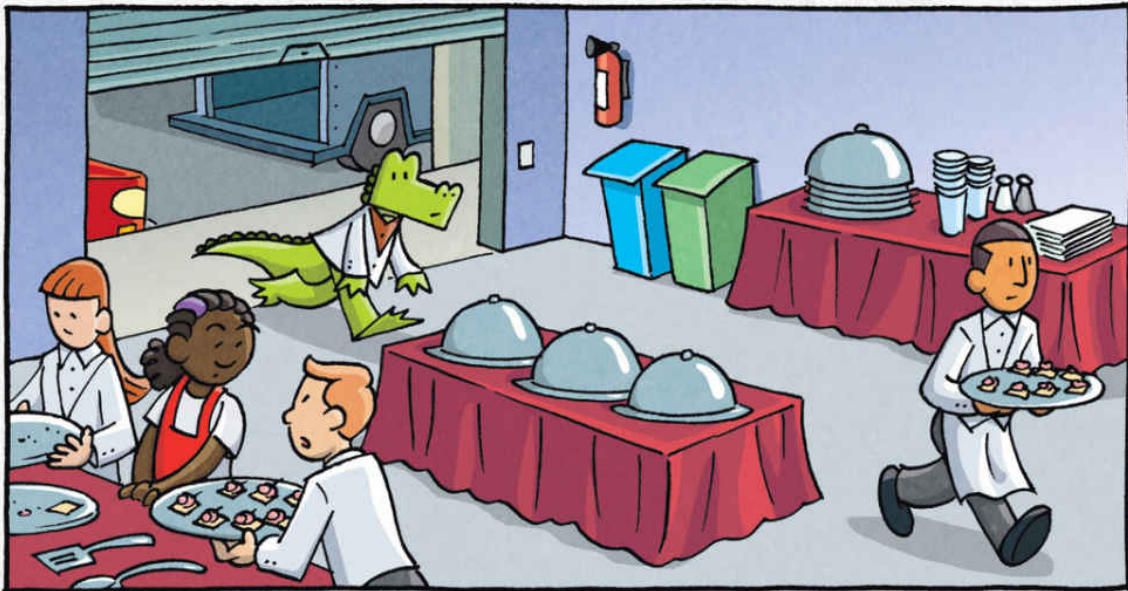




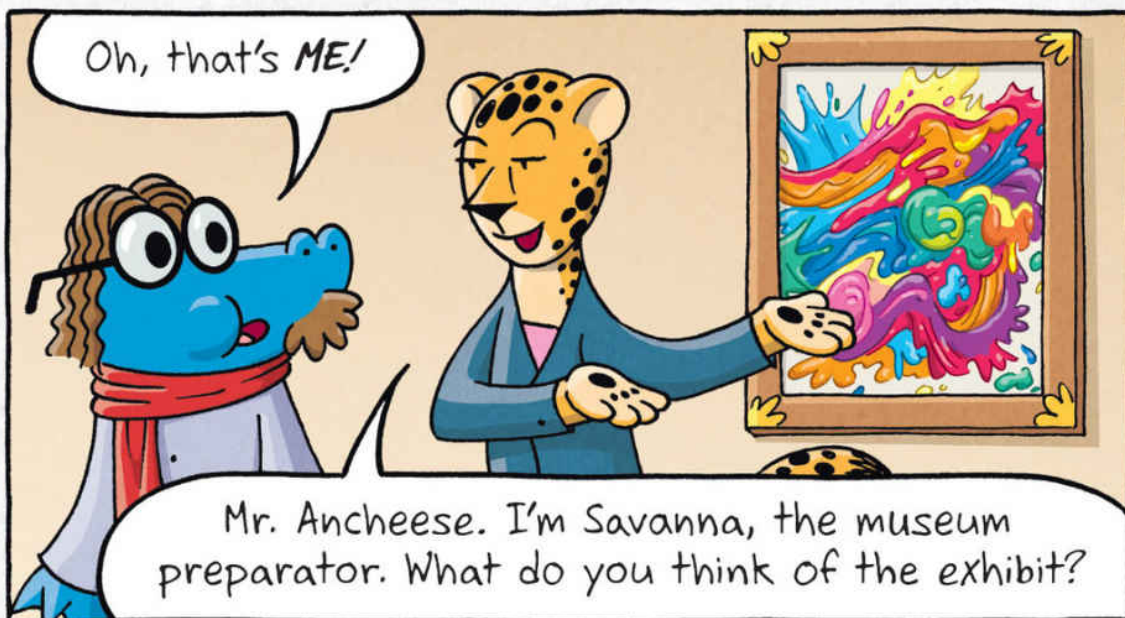
## Chapter 10













The weather is much warmer in Lamparugalightswitchland. That's why I'm wearing this scarf and am, uh...blue.



VRBT!



Mango? Why won't he answer?



What do you think you're doing?



Get out there and serve those hors d'oeuvres! They won't stay fresh forever.

And remember, they're for the GUESTS only!

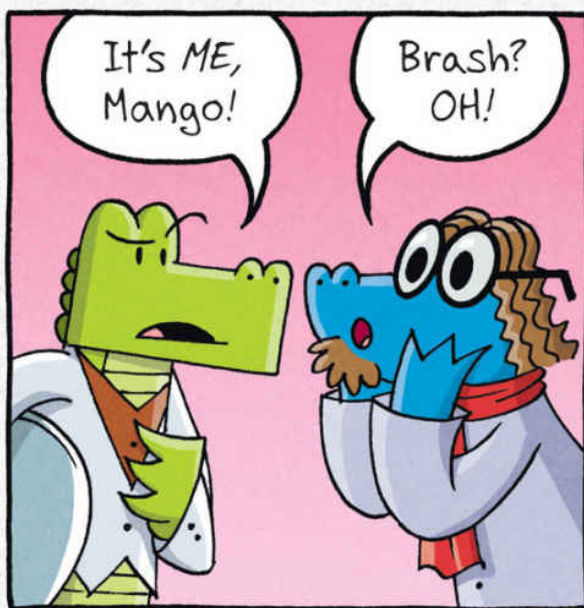
Er, yes, boss!



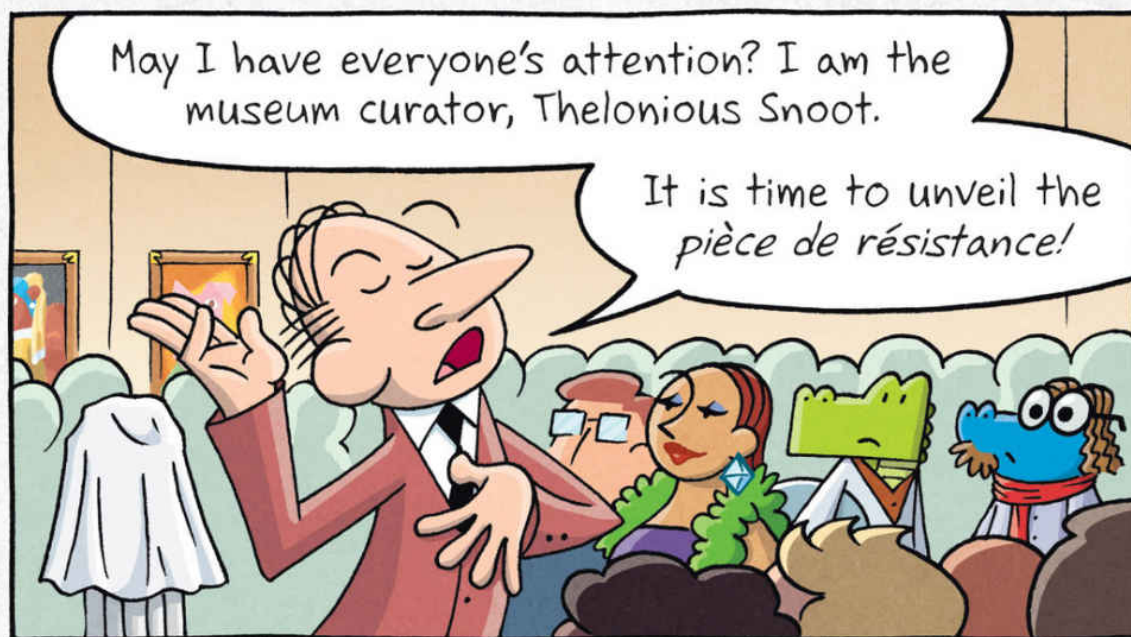








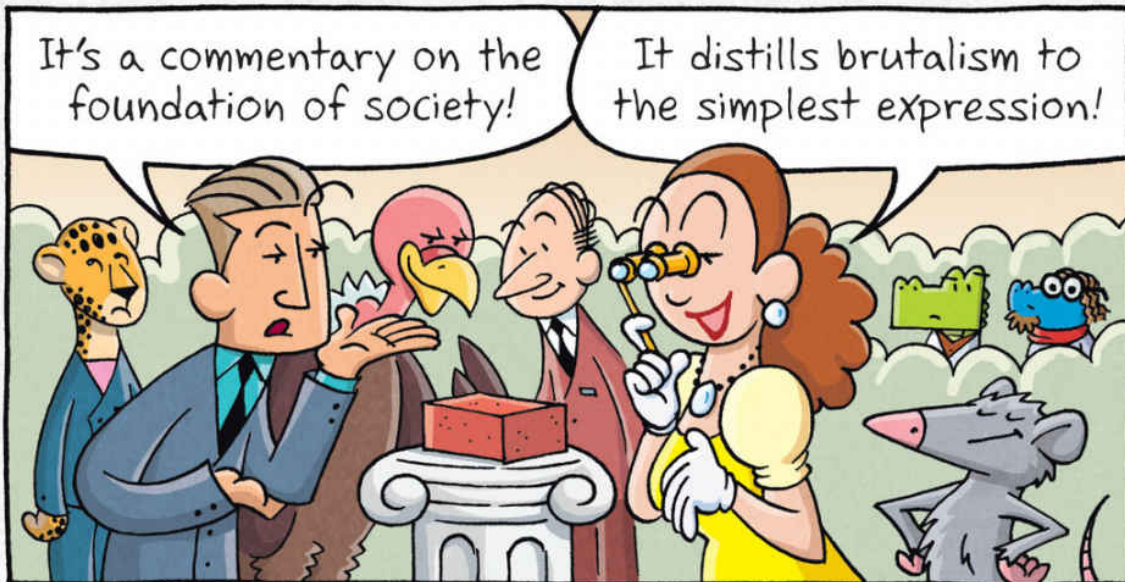
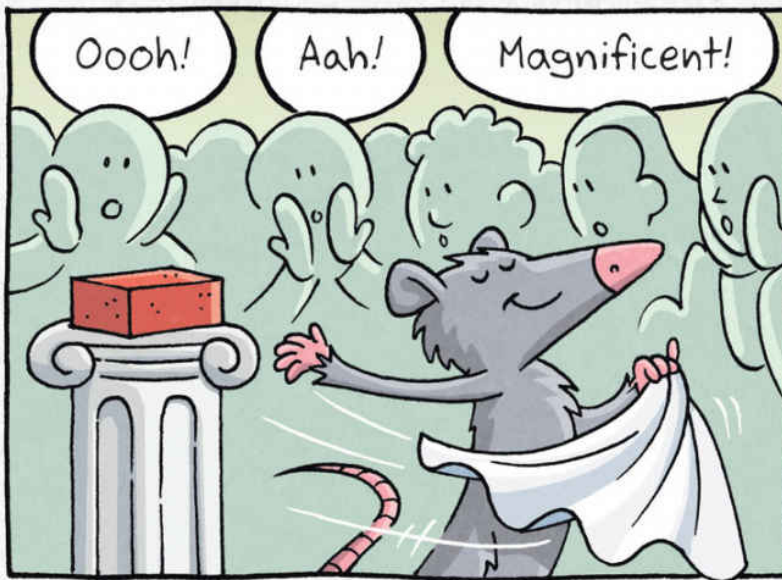














## Chapter 11



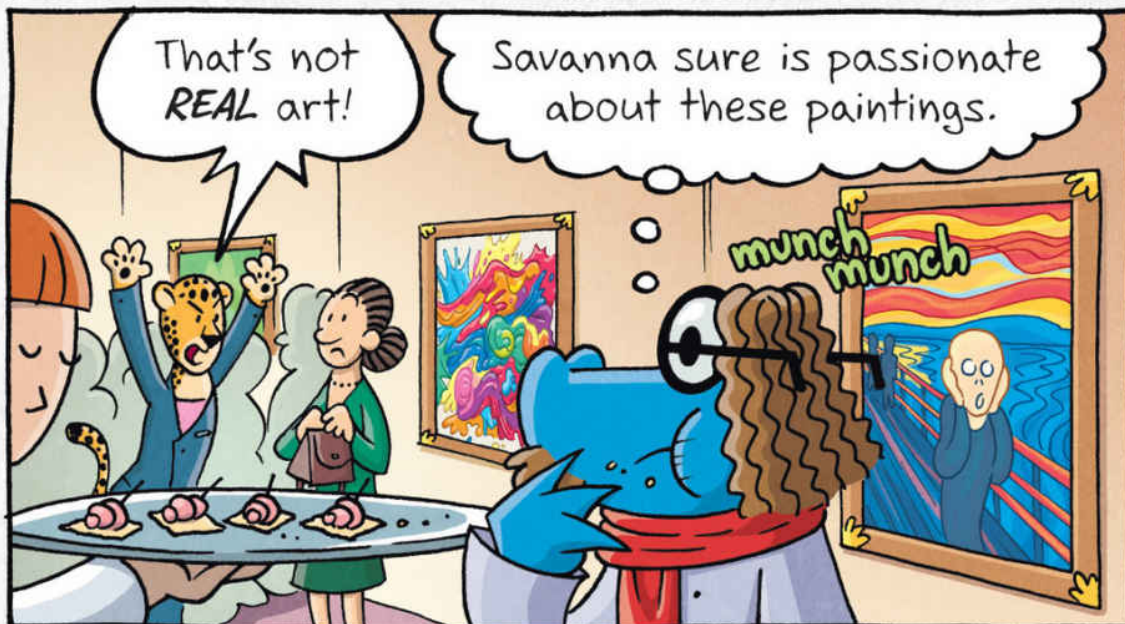




Here, see?



My niece made it for me!



That's not  
**REAL** art!

Savanna sure is passionate  
about these paintings.

munch  
munch



But who here could be  
passionate enough to  
steal them?

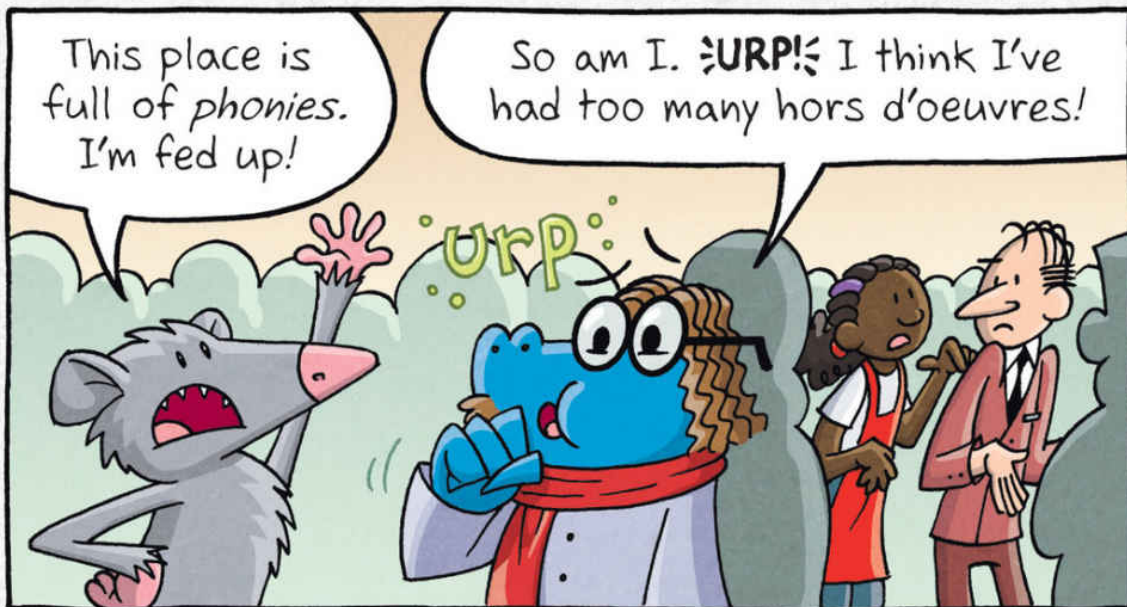
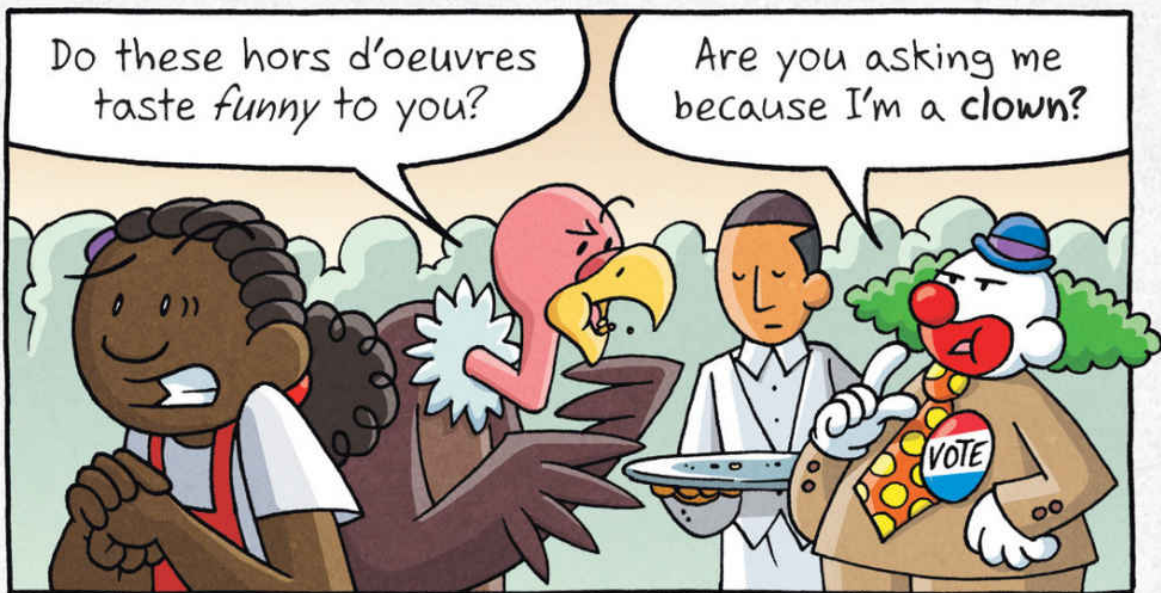


Art isn't about the  
CREATION. Art is about  
the REACTION.

















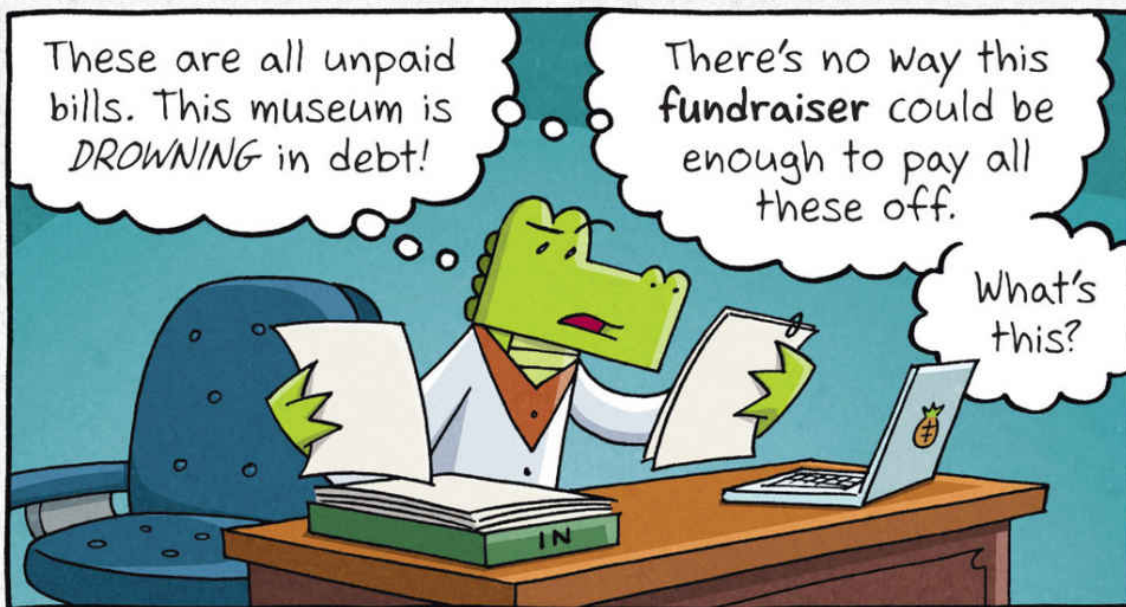
There's gotta be a clue  
in here somewhere.



These are all unpaid  
bills. This museum is  
**DROWNING** in debt!

There's no way this  
**fundraiser** could be  
enough to pay all  
these off.

What's  
this?



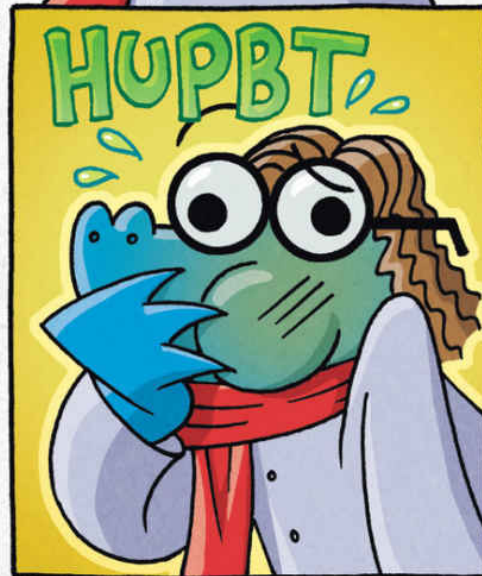
According to this, the  
museum would've gotten  
**MILLIONS** if we hadn't  
recovered the stolen art!











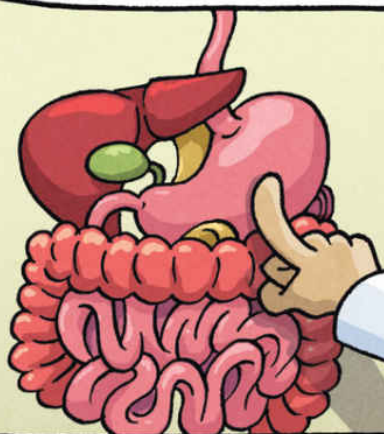


**WE INTERRUPT THIS COMIC FOR A  
PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT.**



Hi, I'm Dr. Jake Hardbones,  
brain surgeon. You may also know  
me as **Doctor Copter**, the *Action  
News Now* helicopter in the sky.

As a brain surgeon, I know a lot about **stomachs**.  
Because some people *THINK* with their stomachs. And  
on the next few pages, everyone will be *TALKING* with  
their stomachs...if you catch my meaning.



What you are about to see is very  
graphic. This is a *graphic novel*,  
after all. If you'd like to avoid  
the unpleasantness, skip ahead  
to page, oh, let's say 121.

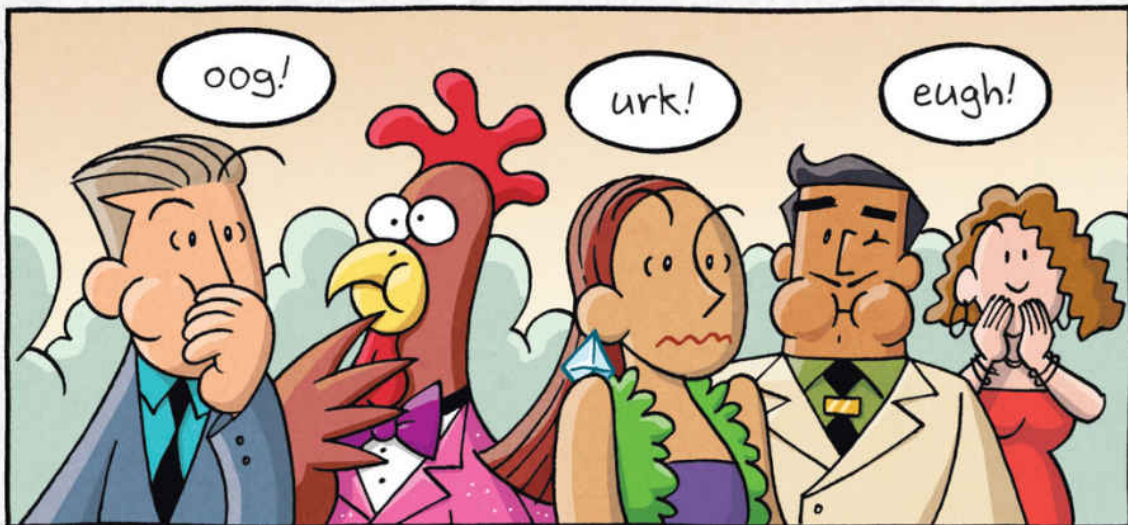
Otherwise,  
**HOLD ON TO YOUR  
POTATOES!**



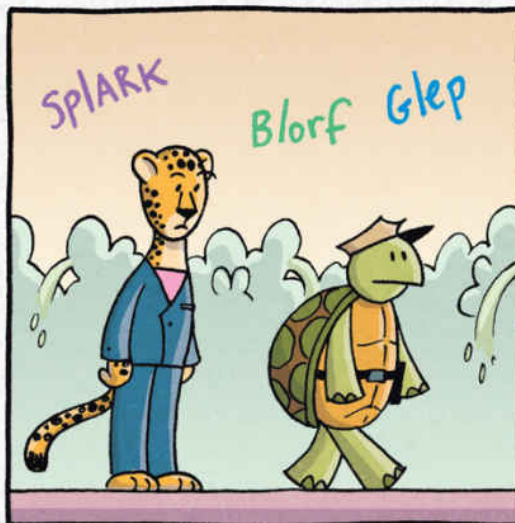
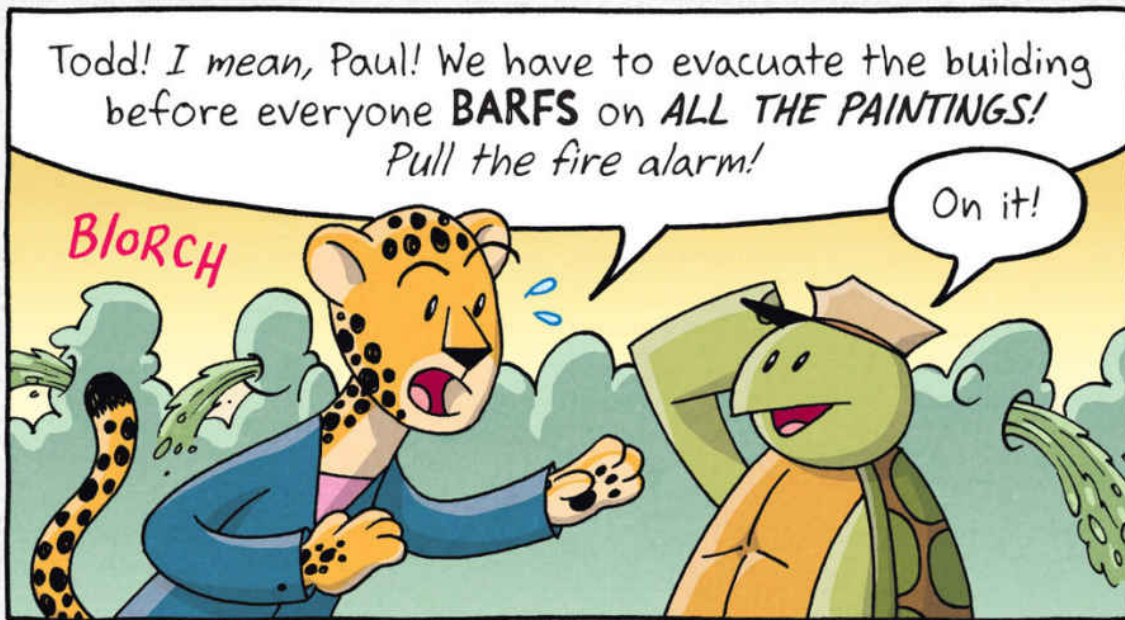
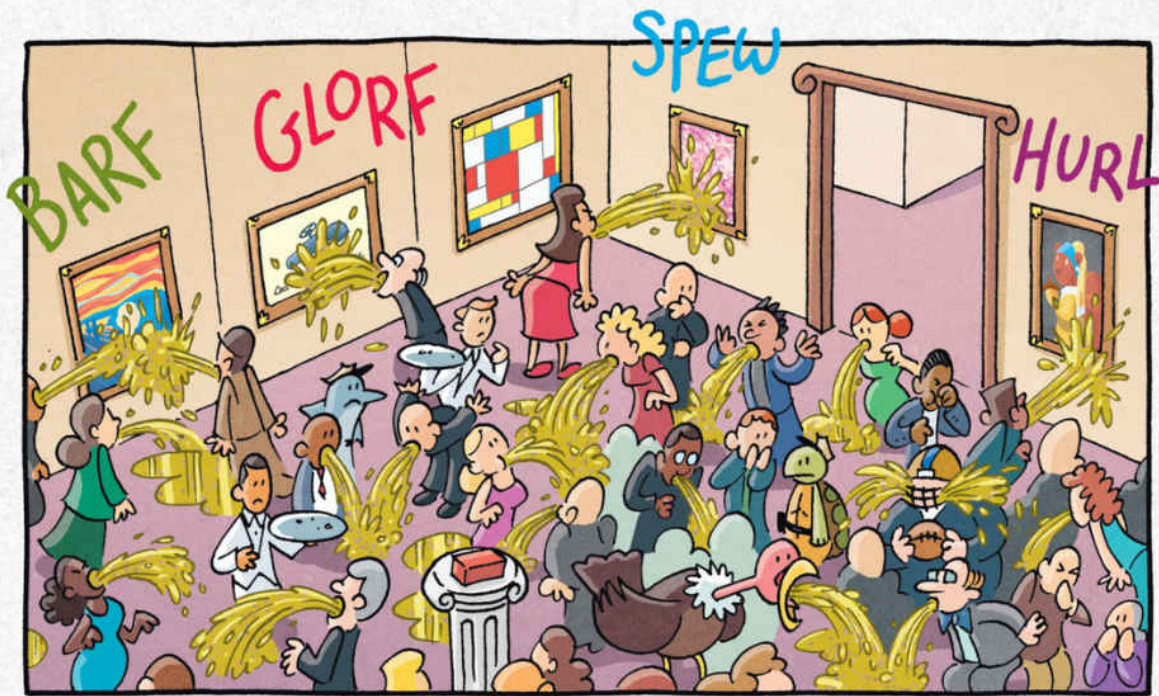


















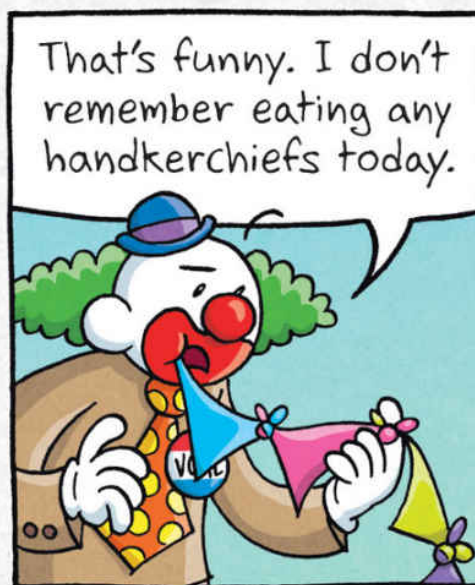
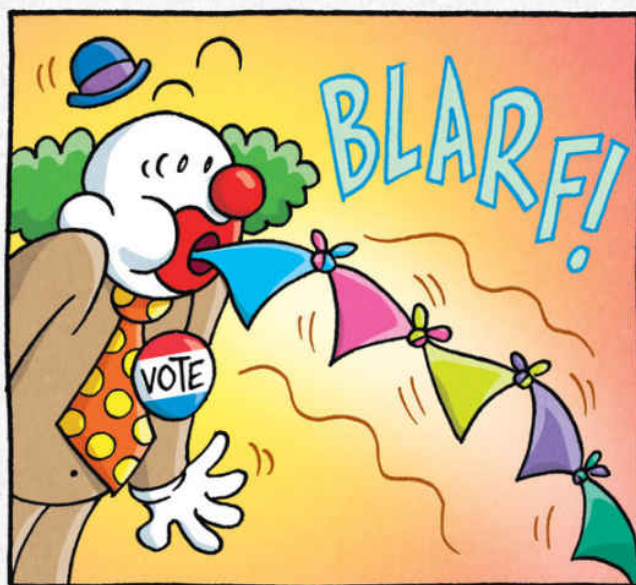
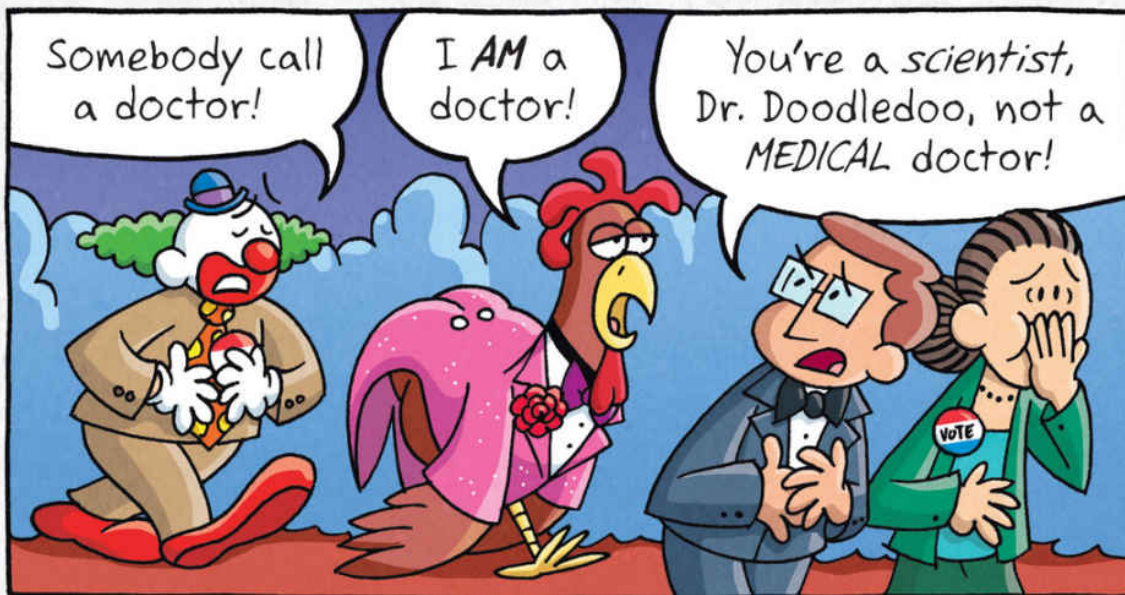




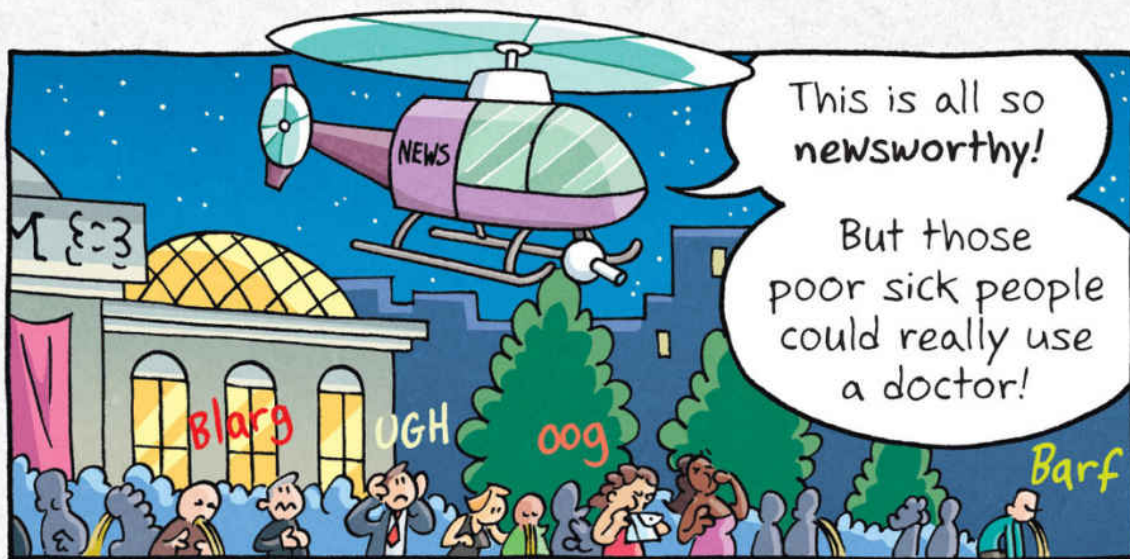
## Chapter 12







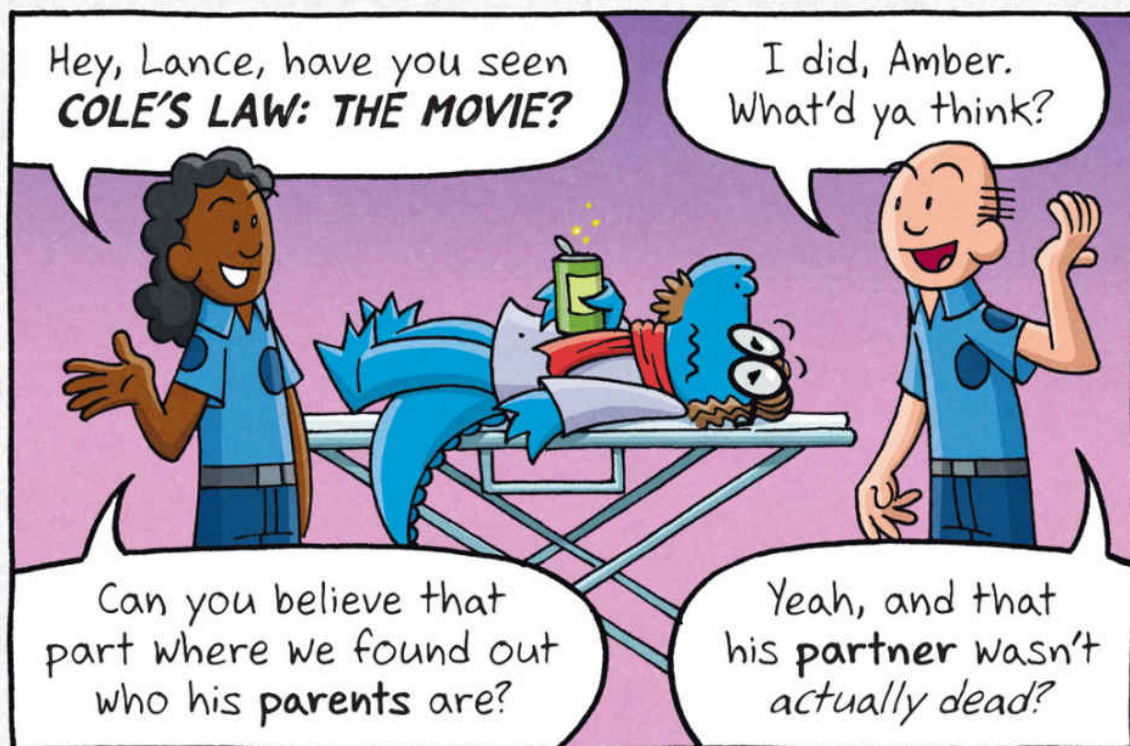










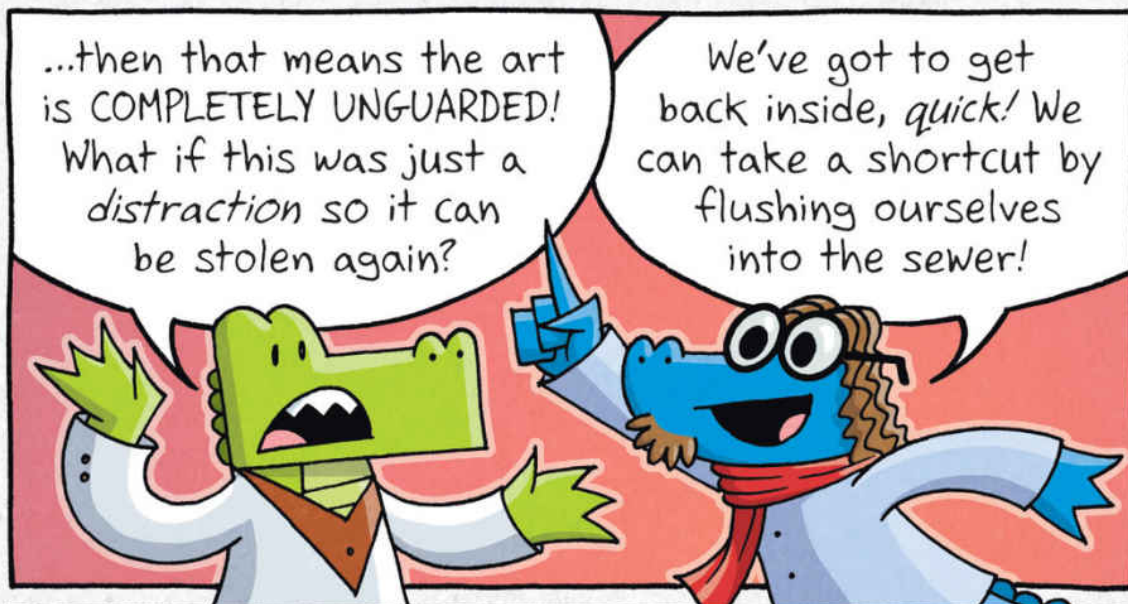




The **curator** and **caterer** are in **cahoots**! He had the art insured for MILLIONS in case of theft, but since we foiled that plan she decided to sabotage the gala by **POISONING THE HORS D'OEUVRES**!













But they won't escape the  
**InvestiGators!**

Nice to see your  
true colors, Mango.



It's good to be myself  
again, Brash... Even if I  
am still a little *rumbly*  
in my *tumbly*.

The thief must've taken  
the art out through the  
staff entrance.

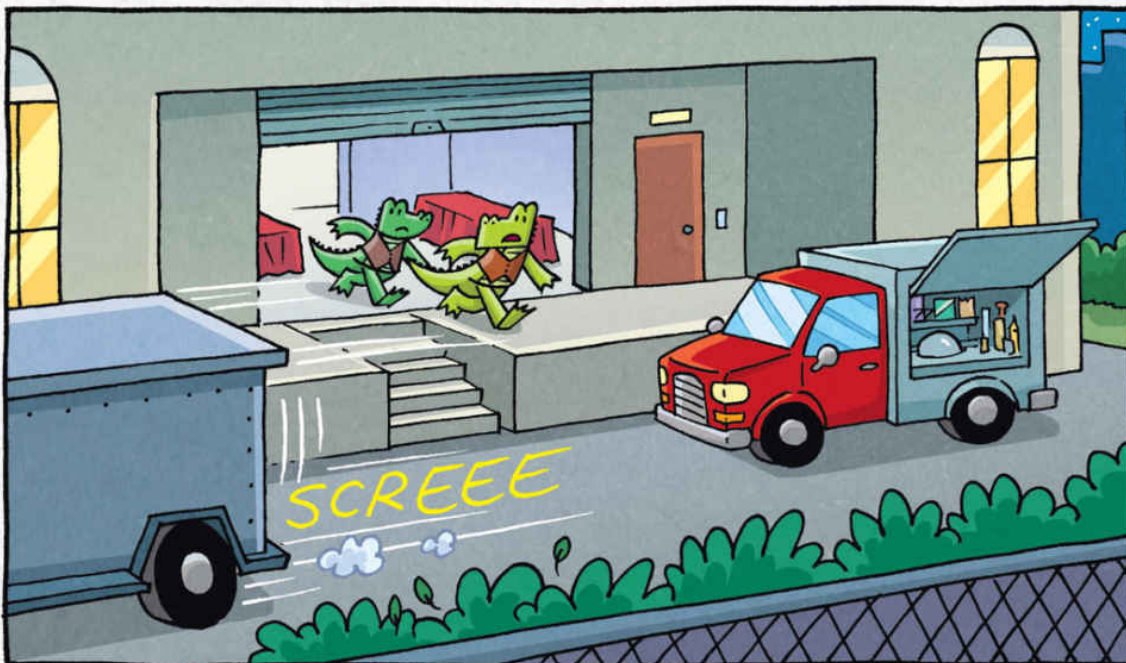


LET'S GO! They can't have gotten far!

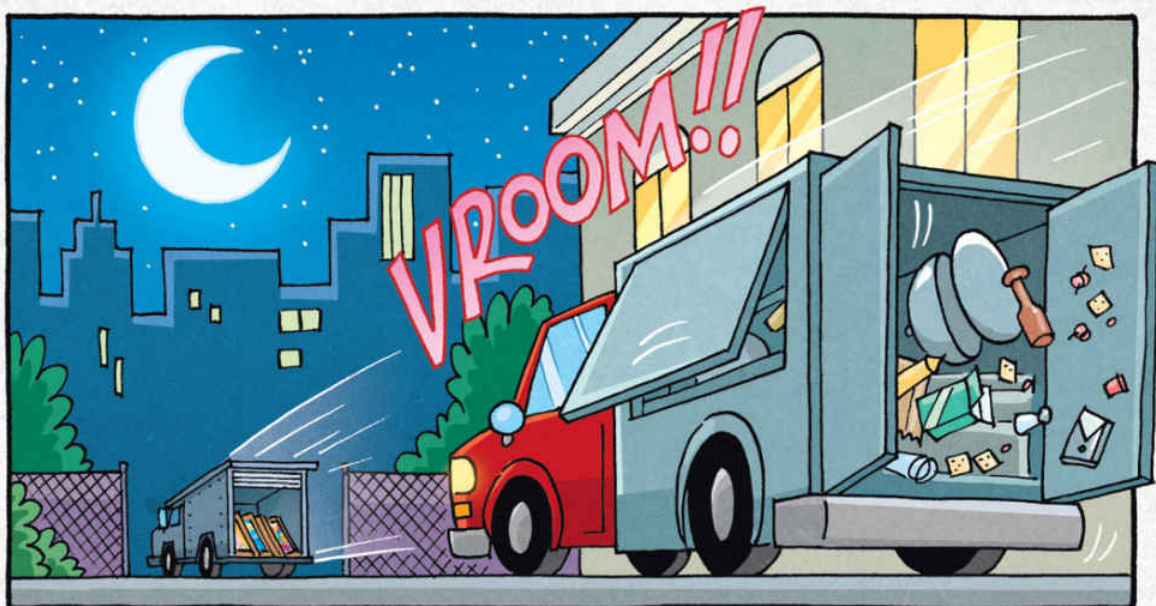
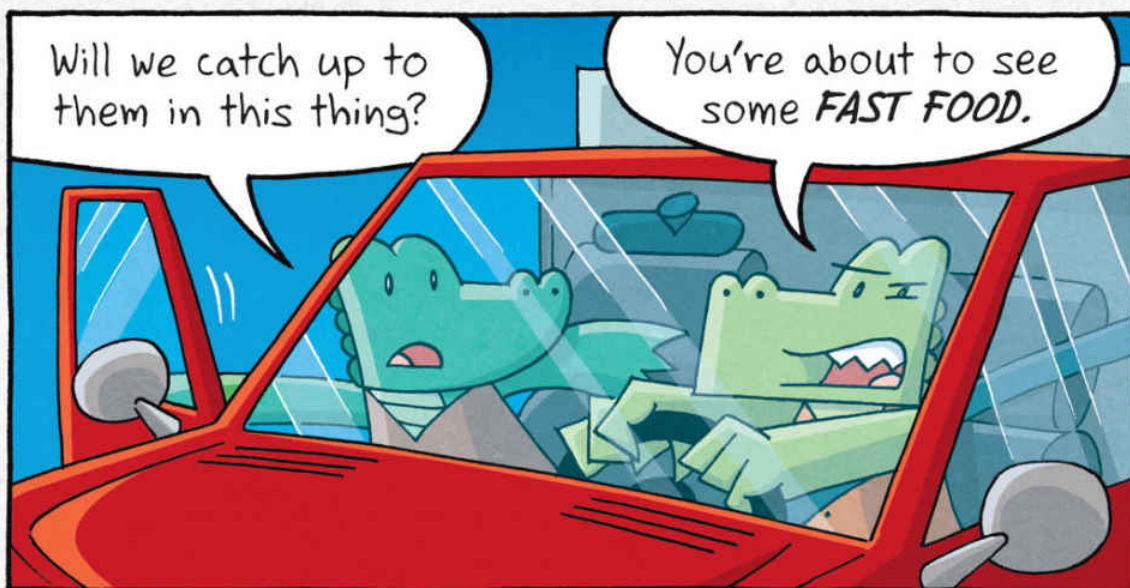
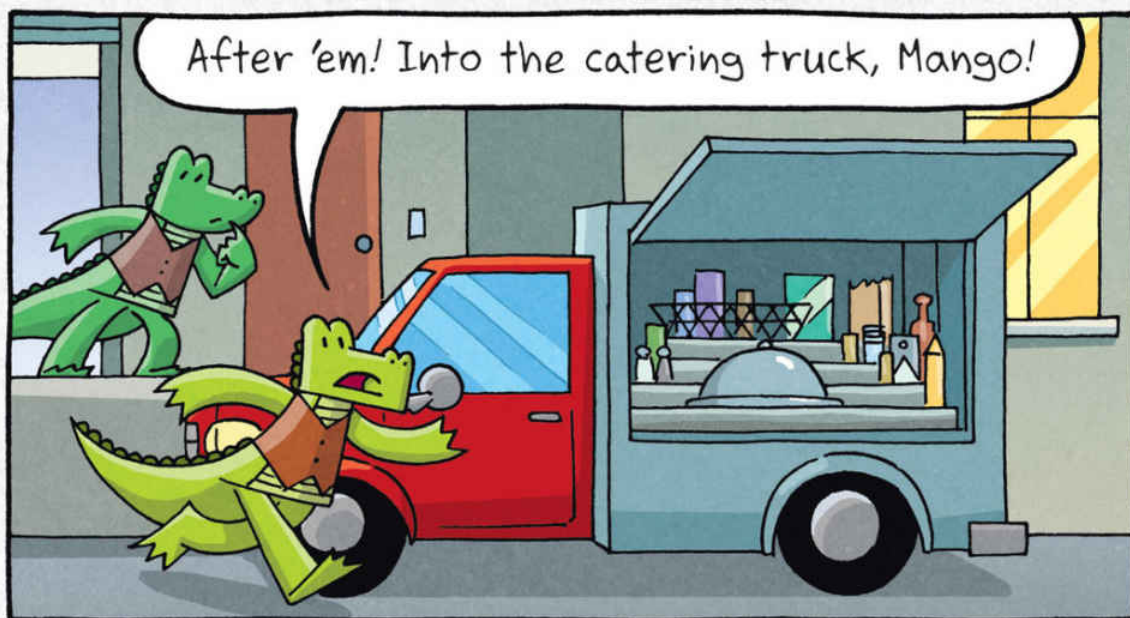
Now I know how  
you felt for most of  
book two, Brash!





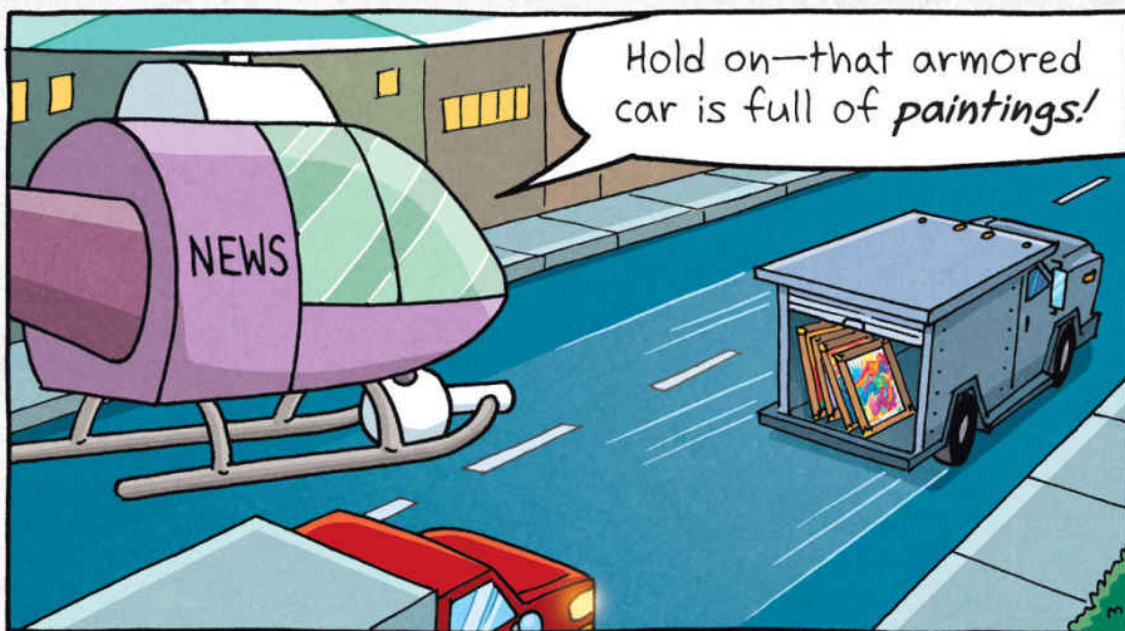




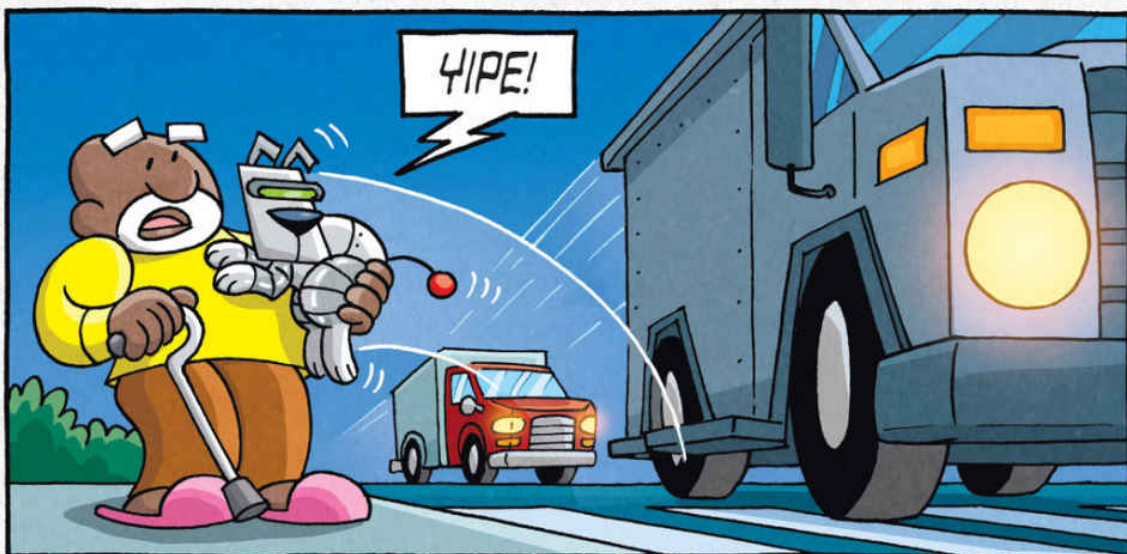
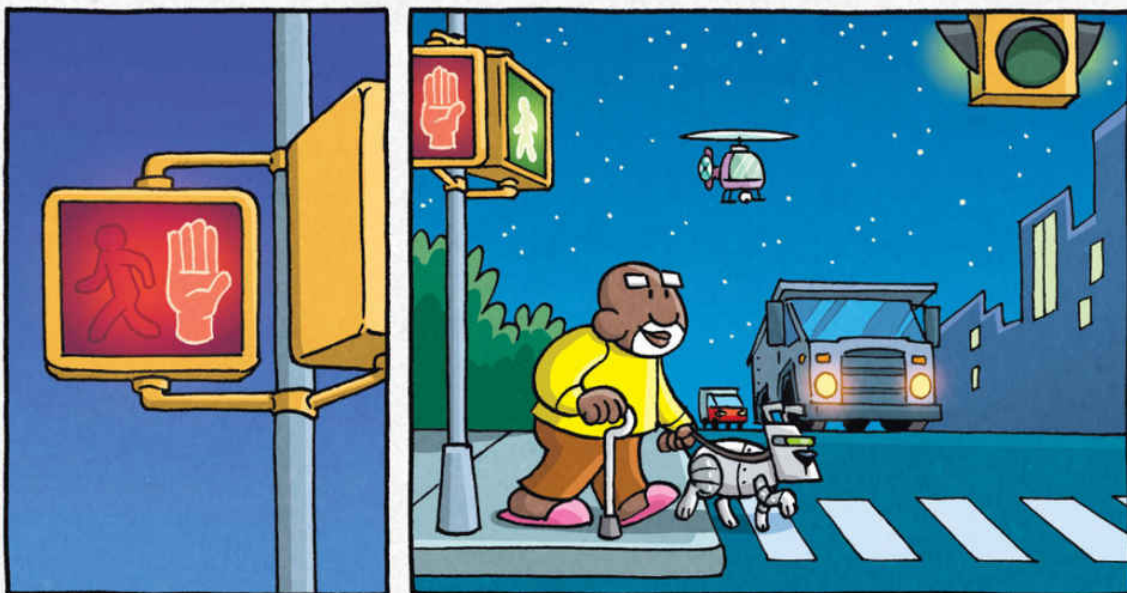




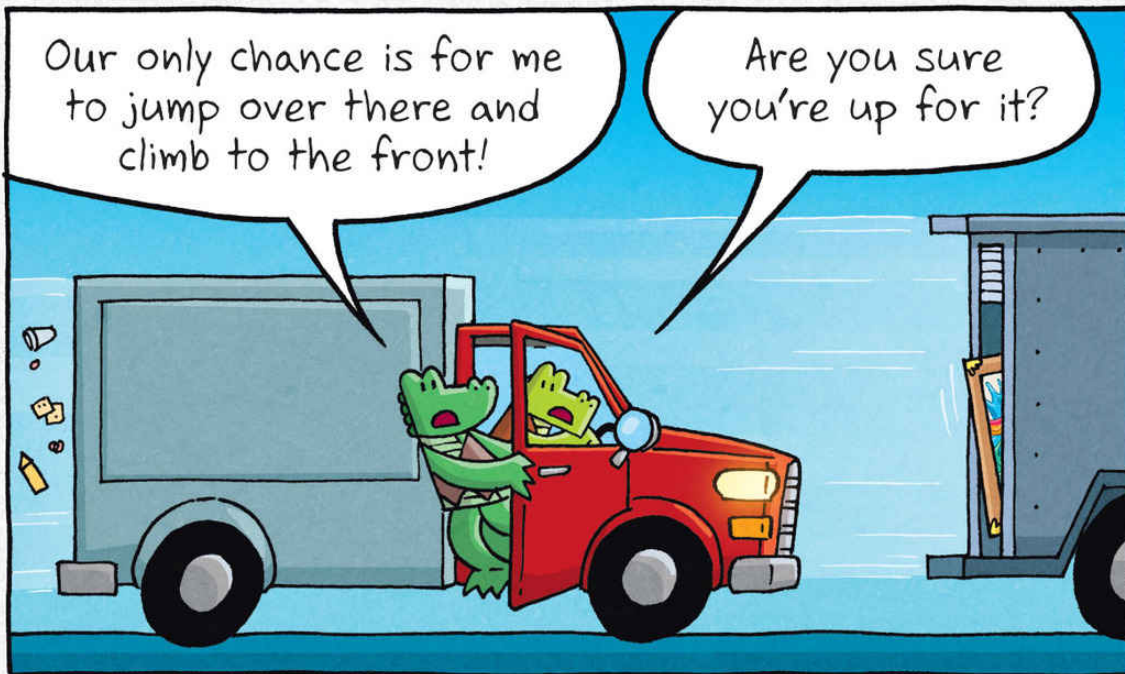
## Chapter 13



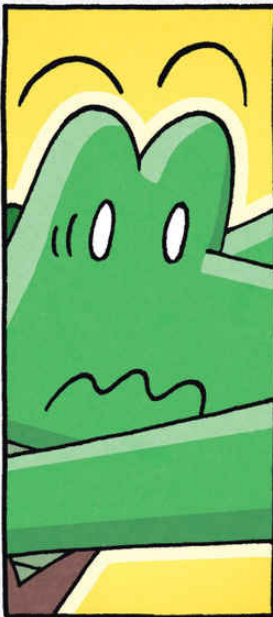
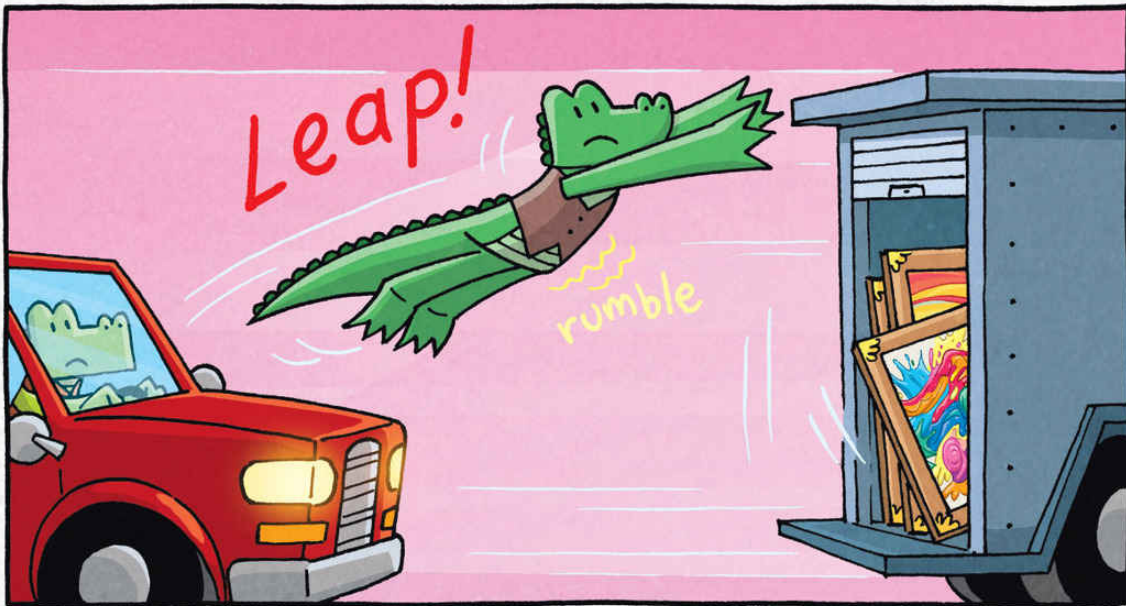




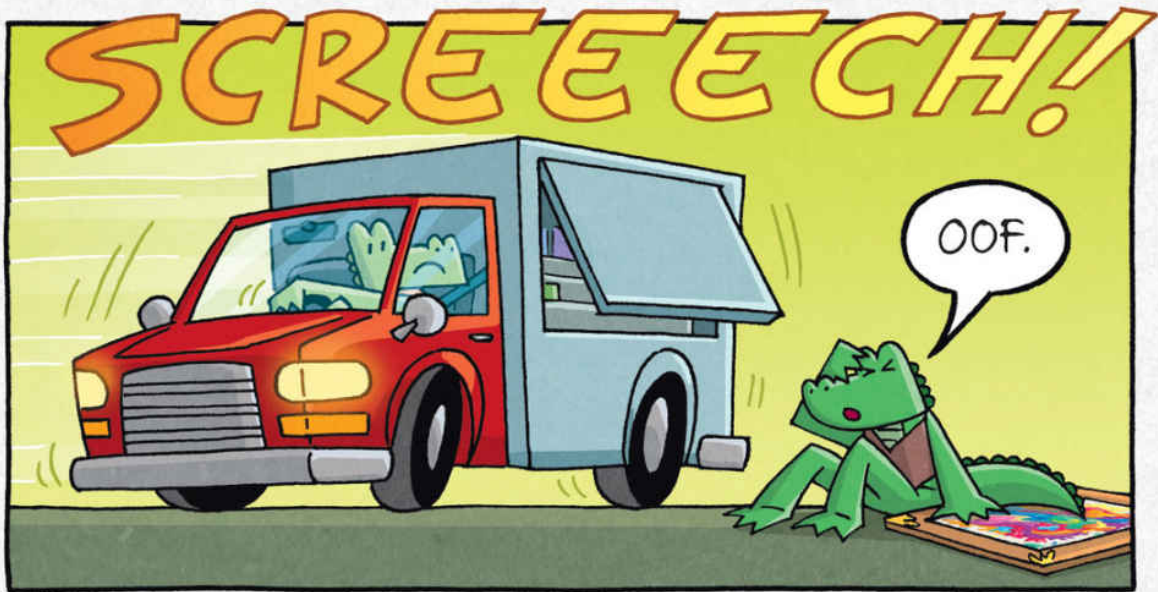




















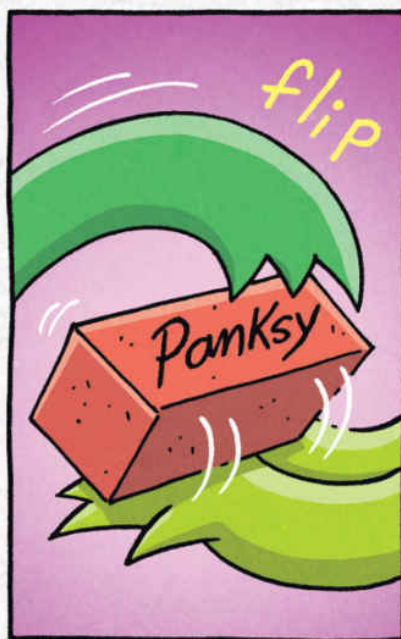
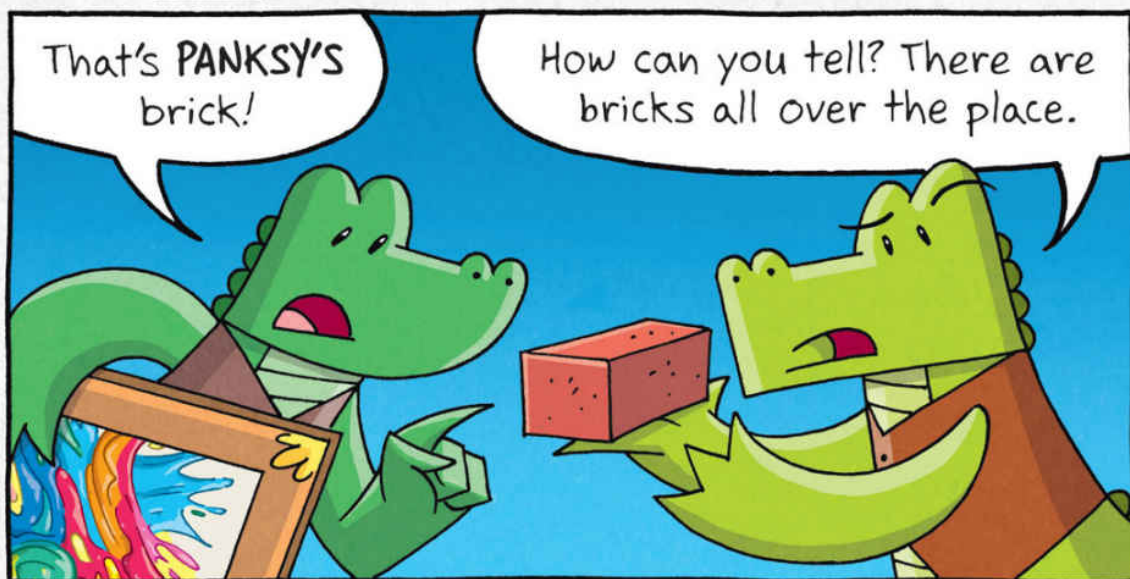
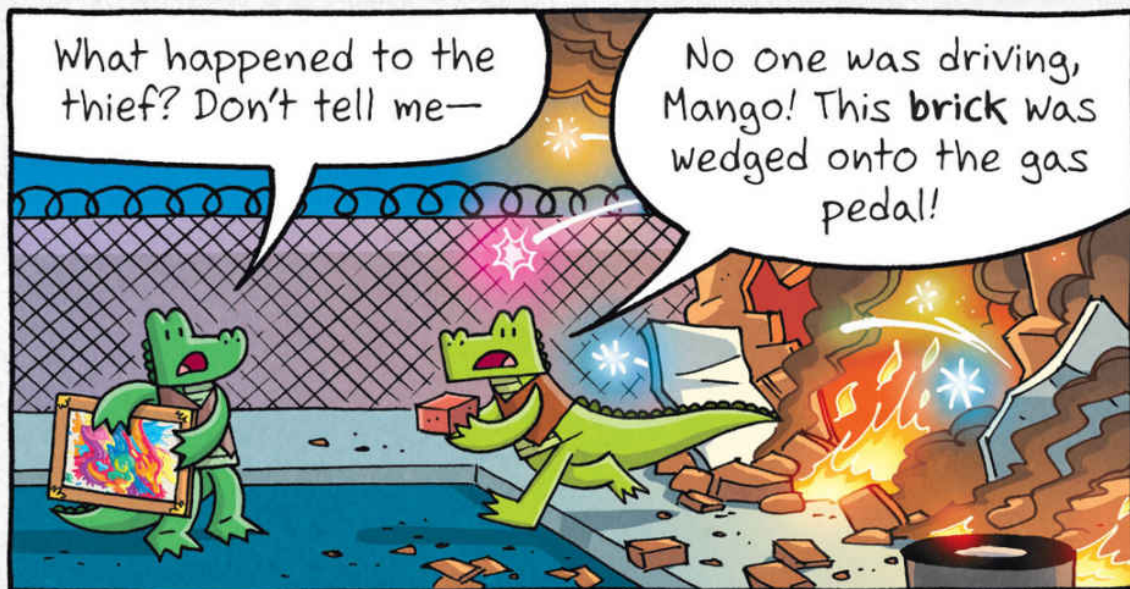




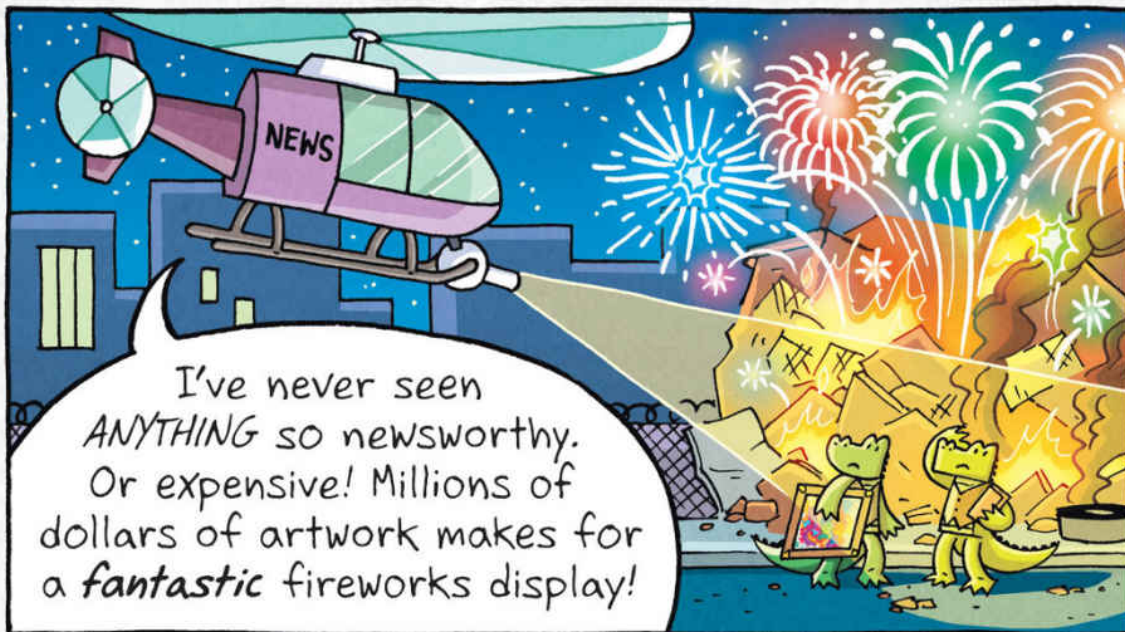




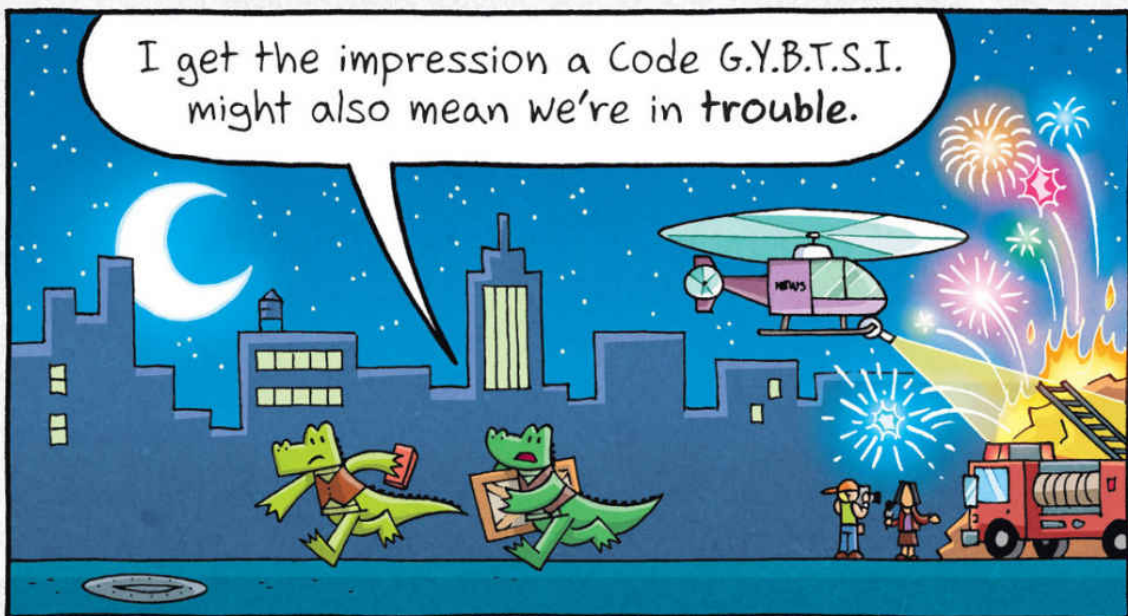
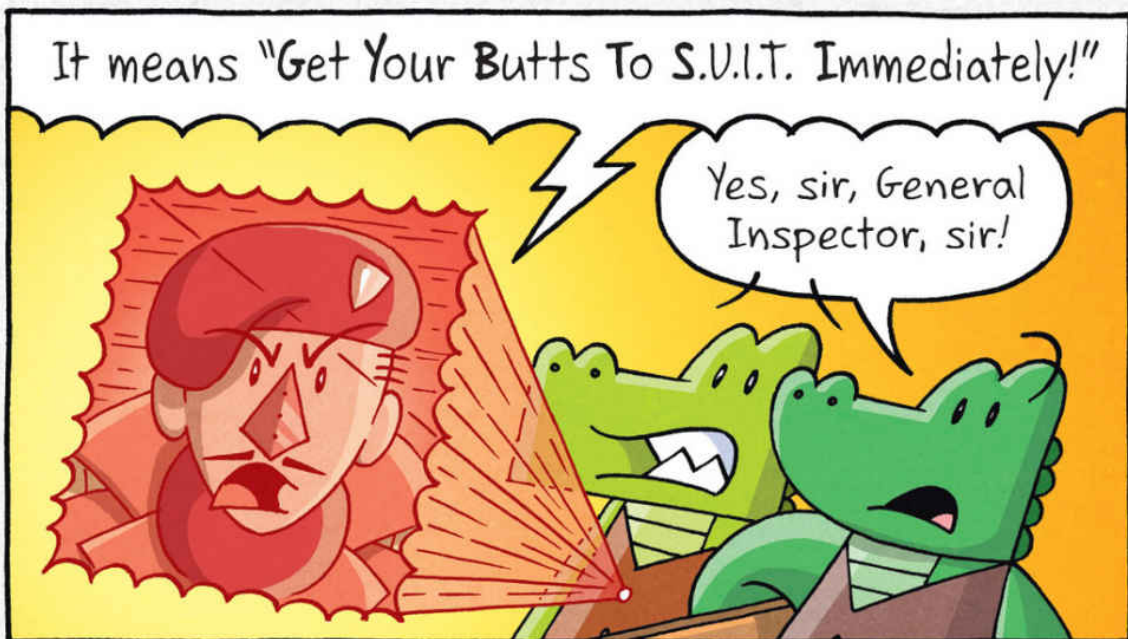
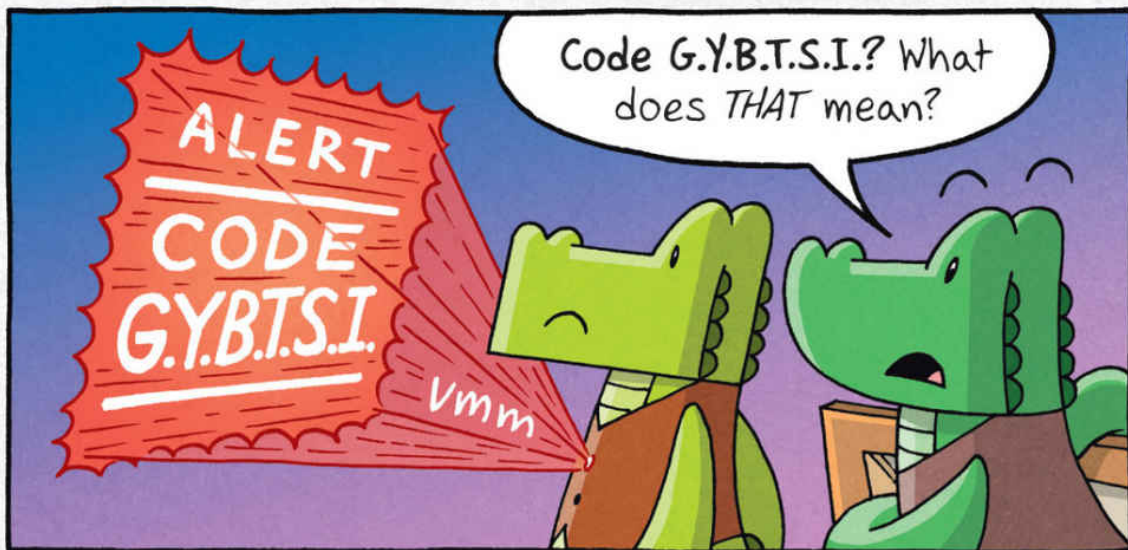














## Chapter 14















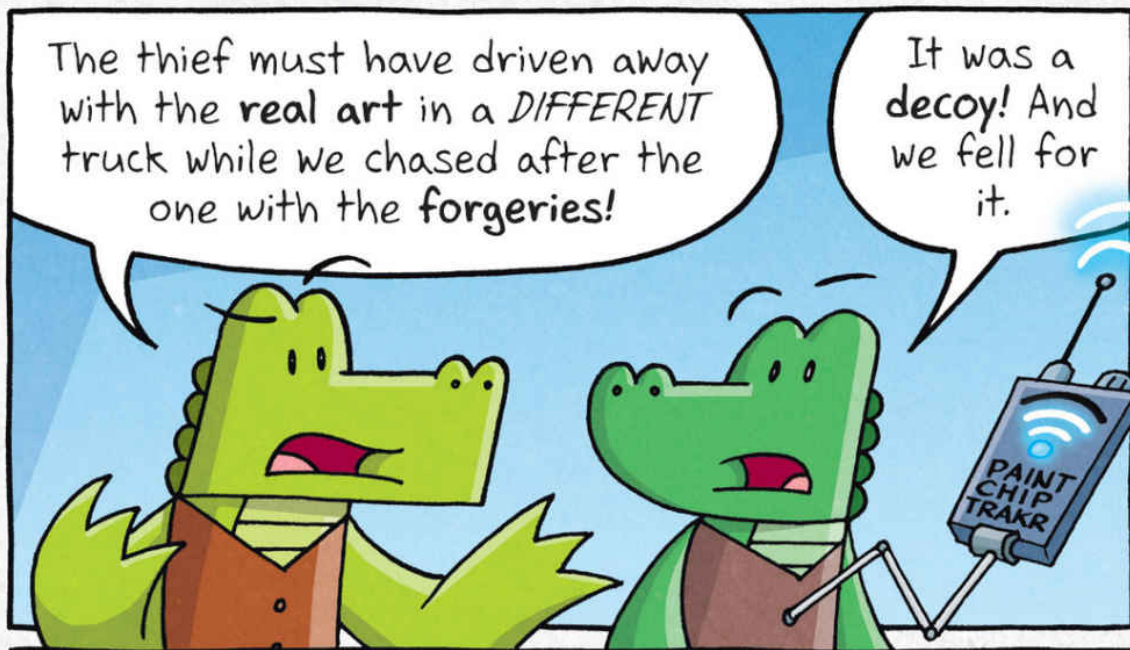










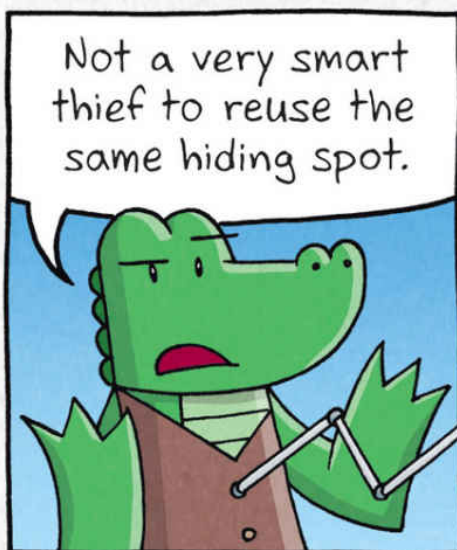




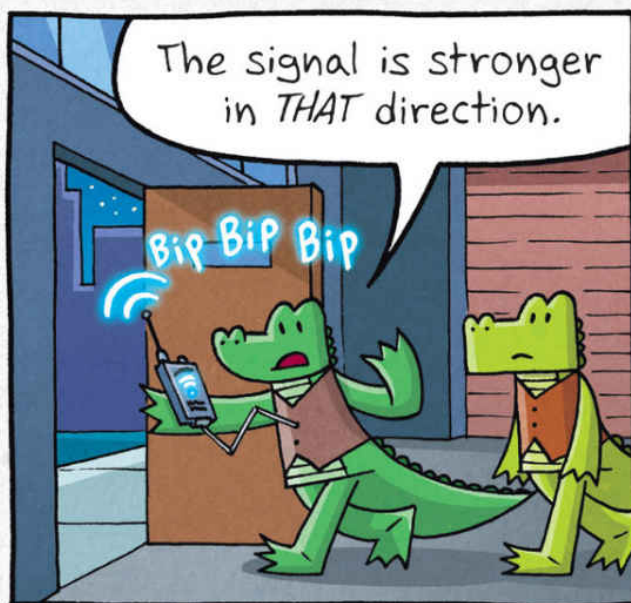
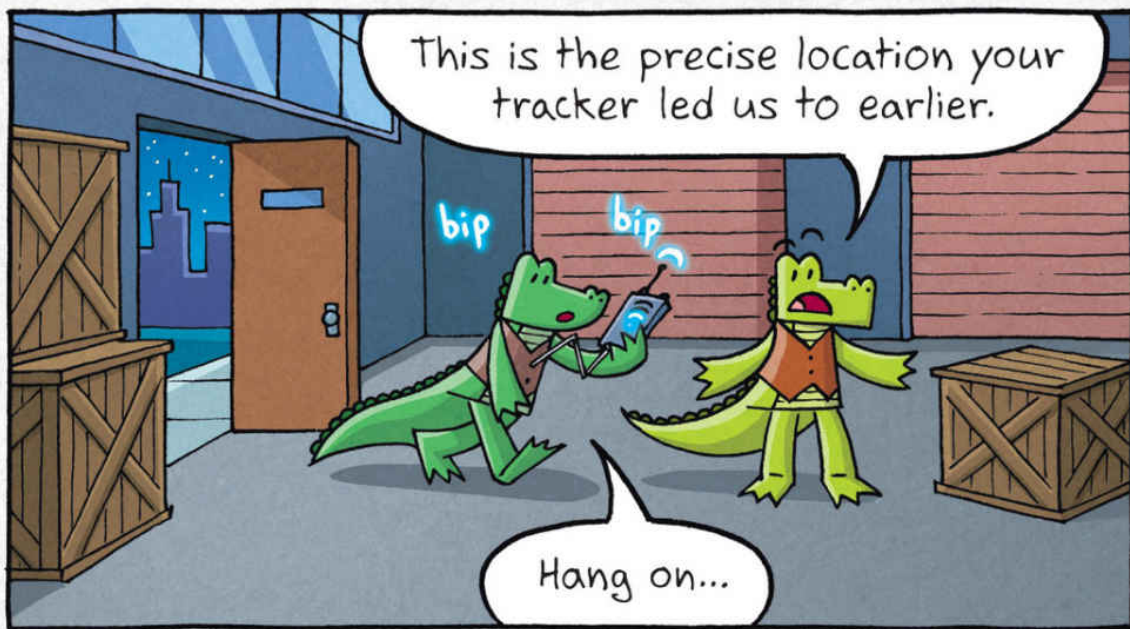
## Chapter 15



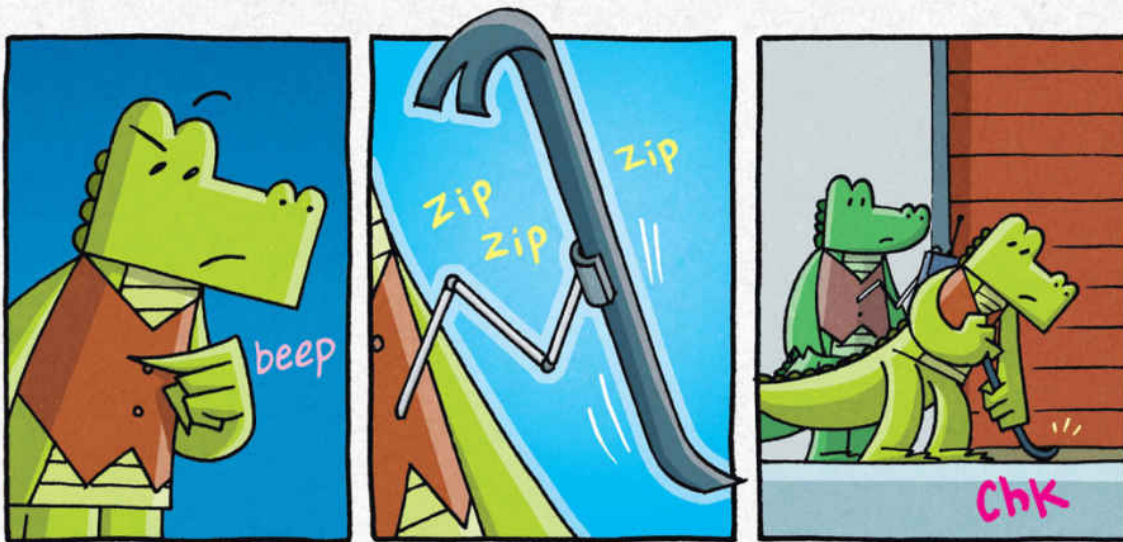












The missing masterpieces! And also your painting!



Let's make sure it really is mine...

Yup!



Whoever the forger is, they're good, but they missed my signature.





Brash! The tracker *WASN'T* out of alignment when we first found my painting. Because *THAT* wasn't *MY* painting. The tracker was pointing to my painting in *THIS* building the whole time!



So if the **REAL** art has been in here all along...then the paintings we returned to the museum were the **fakes**?

≧GASP!≦

The thief **WANTED** their forgeries to be found!

They painted their copies here, then moved them next door.



This **TOO OBVIOUS** hiding spot **WAS** meant to trick whoever showed up into searching the other building.





The copies of the original paintings were made to pull off a **switcheroo**, so the forgeries would get put on display at the gala. Our suspect must be—





Seriously, Mango? This is basic detective stuff!  
**MMO** stands for **M**eans, **M**otive, and **O**ppportunity.

I knew that.  
I just wanted  
to see if *YOU*  
knew that.

**Panksy's** an artist. And  
a prankster. He probably has  
the *MEANS* to create forgeries.

The **curator** insured the  
art for millions. Money makes  
for a pretty tempting *MOTIVE*.

And the **caterer**  
gave everyone food poisoning,  
which created the *OPPORTUNITY*  
to steal back the forgeries.



So...were they working together or separately?  
Did **ONE** of them do it, or did they **ALL** do it?  
And if the thief already *HAS* the real art here...



...*WHY* would they try  
to steal *BACK* the  
forgeries?



Hmm... To answer that,  
we may have to go all the  
way back to the  
beginning.



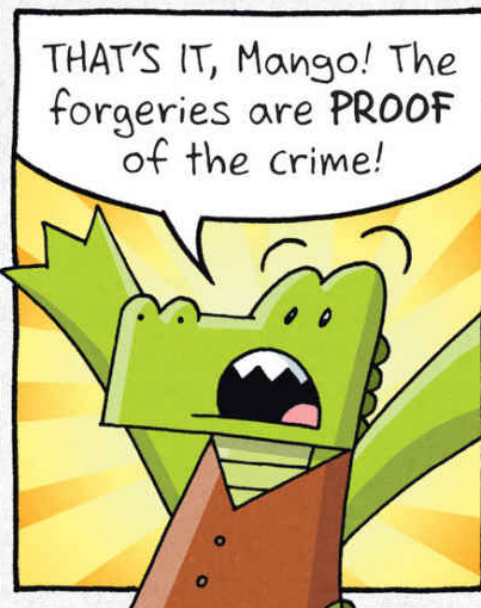
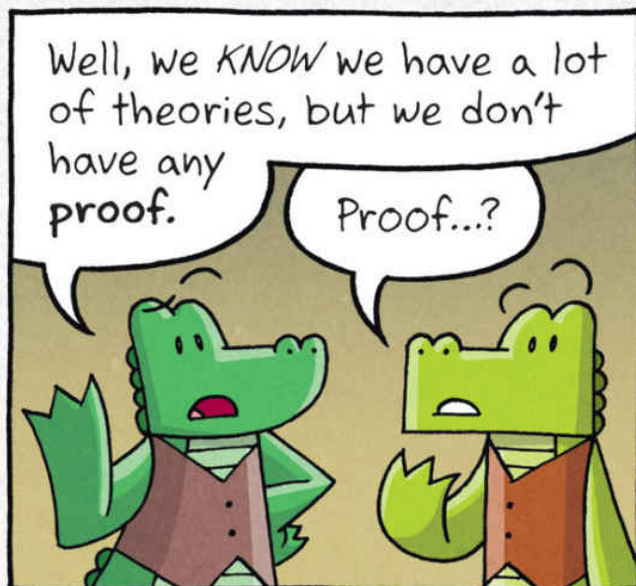
Welp, I'll start  
flippin' pages...



No, Mango. I mean we need  
to forget all we know...or  
*THINK* we know.





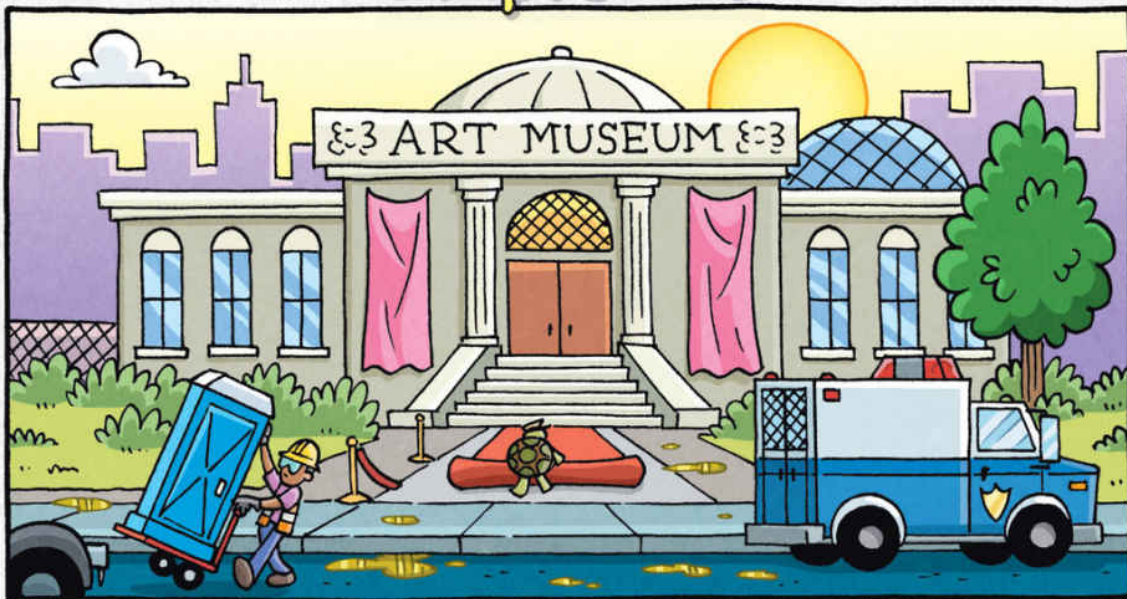








## Chapter 16



I am Brash, an **InvestiGator** for S.U.I.T.!  
You're probably wondering why I invited you all here.



Invited? I work  
here! I've been  
here since last  
night!

Someone stole my catering  
truck, and no one's offered  
me a ride home!

And I've got  
nowhere better  
to be!









...but no amount of money would be worth *ruining* the museum's reputation. I'd never be able to throw another gala again. And that's my *favorite part* of running a museum!



A flimsy excuse!

**CATERER...**

Uh...

I'm sorry,  
I never asked  
your name...



No one ever  
does, and it's  
*SO RUDE!*



**CATERER SORUDE!** To empty the museum and leave the paintings ripe for stealing, you gave everyone **FOOD POISONING!**



I didn't *mean* to. I only found out about the **MOLD** in the hors d'oeuvres after it was *too late!*



But I had nothing to make them with except **expired ingredients!** Because *SOMEONE* still hasn't paid me for **LAST YEAR'S** gala!

Don't look at me.  
Blame the city council!

So it's **PAYBACK**  
you're after!

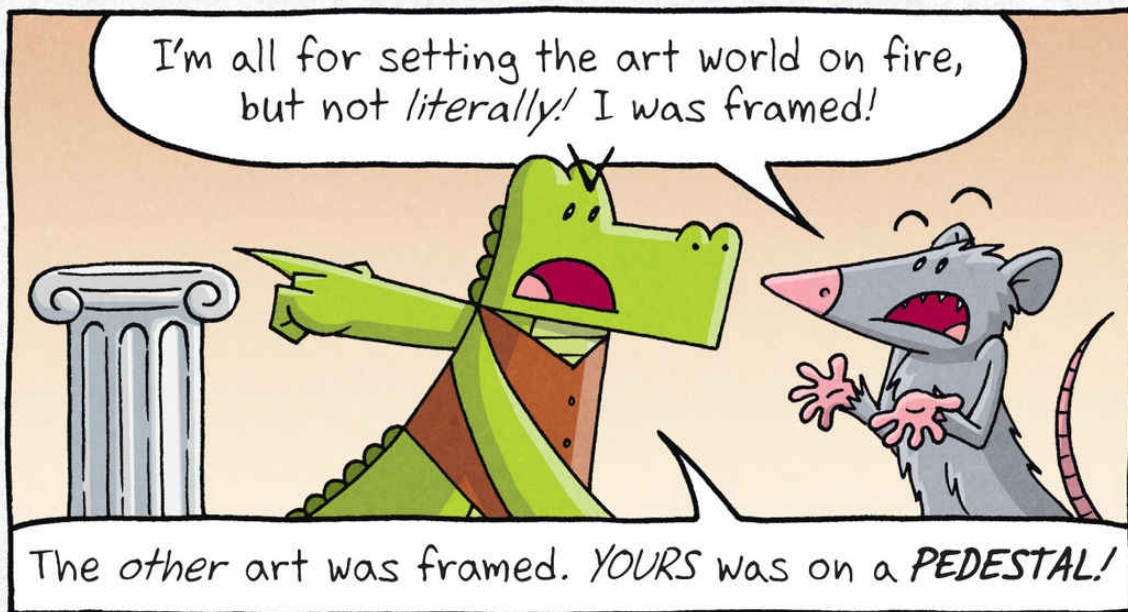
And **PANKSY!** You don't buy into this artsy-fartsy nonsense. You stole the paintings as a **prank** to teach these snobs a lesson!

I'll admit,  
I do like a  
good joke.

Is it a joke that **YOUR BRICK**  
survived the fire that turned  
the other art to ash?



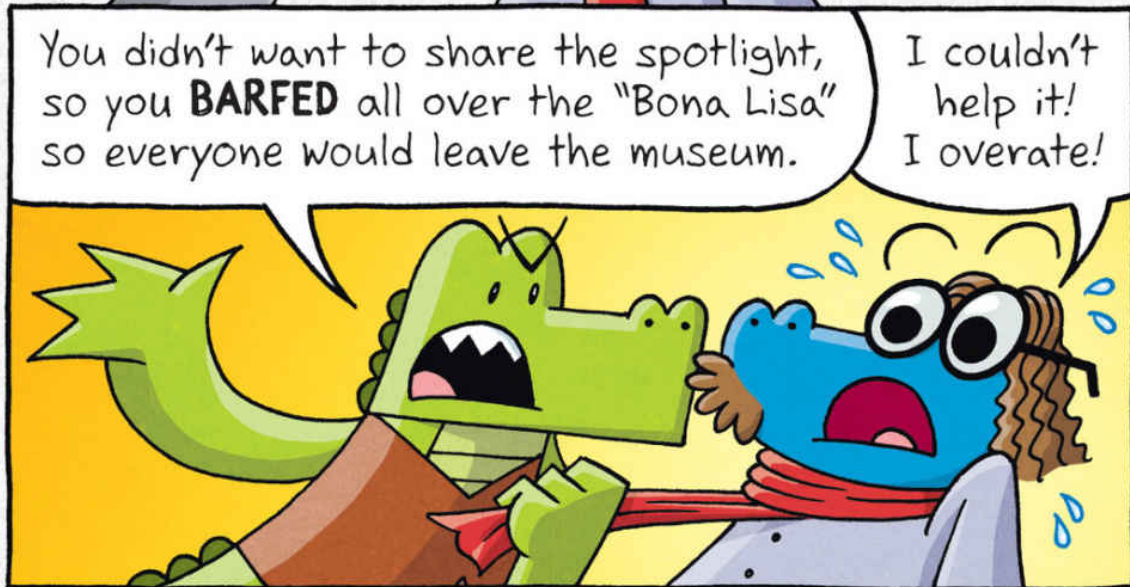




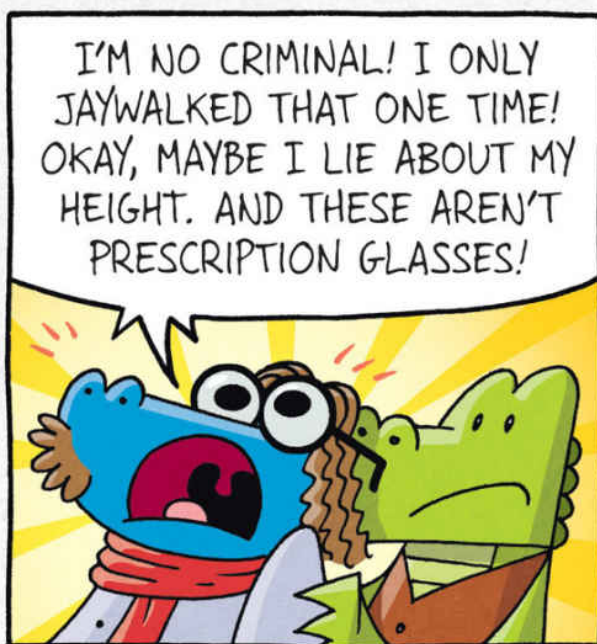








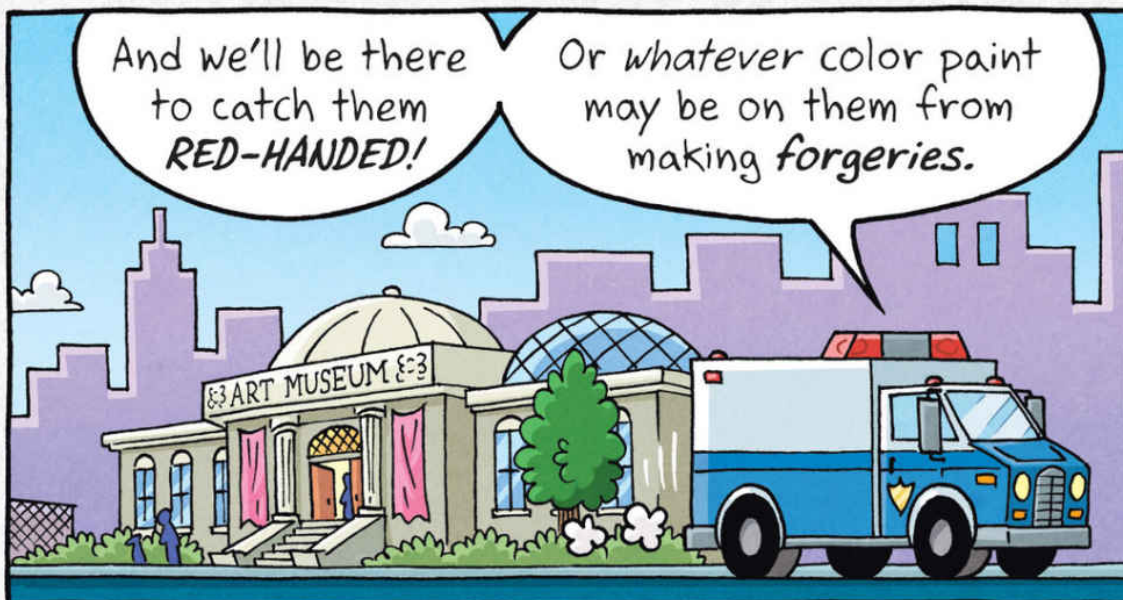
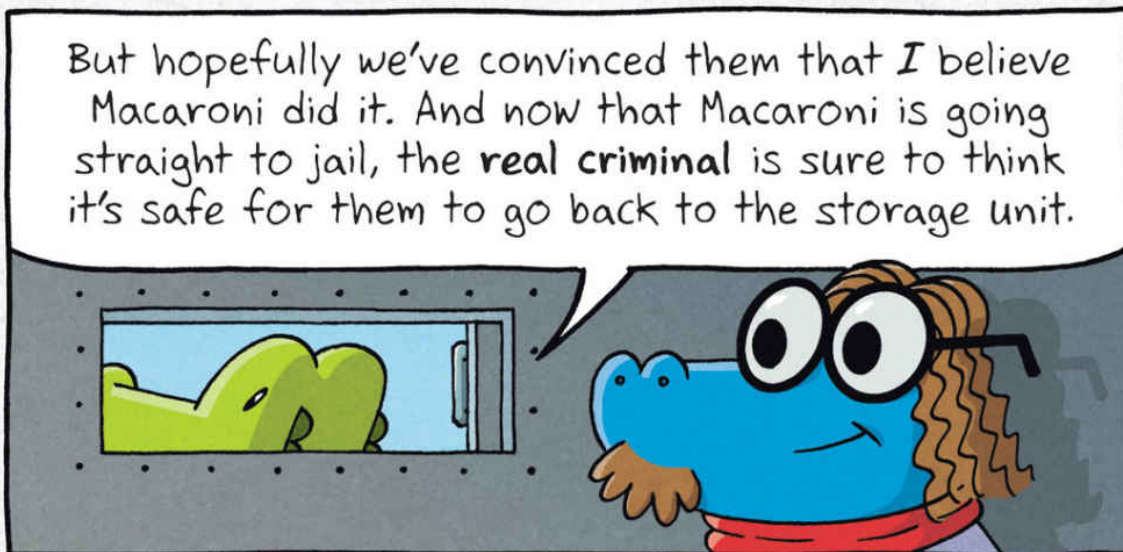






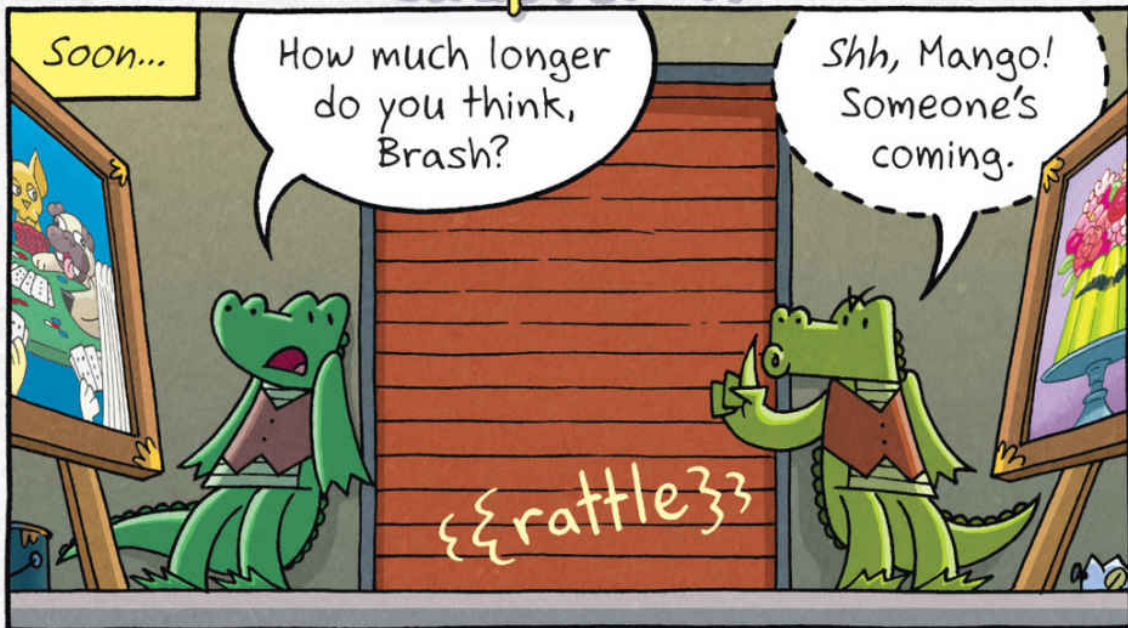








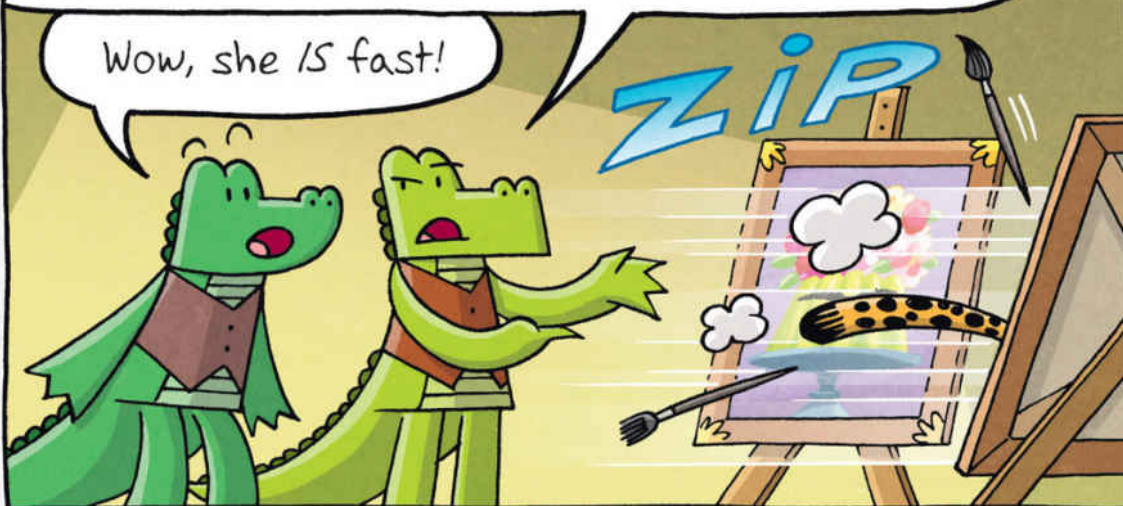
## Chapter 17



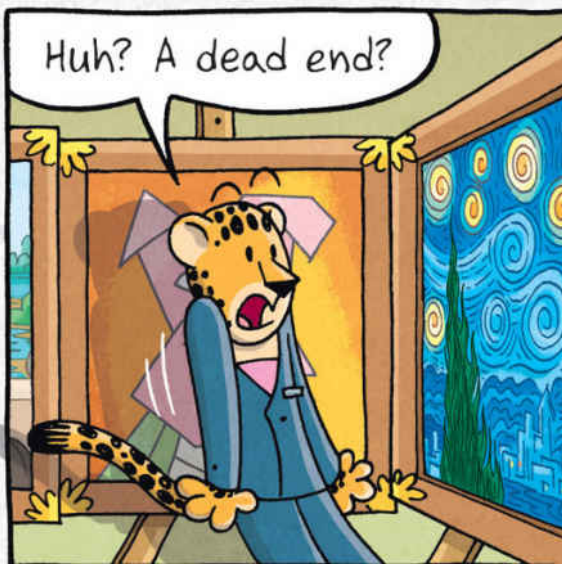


She's technically *NOT* a jungle cat, Mango.  
But only a **CHEETAH** could be fast enough to—

Wow, she *IS* fast!



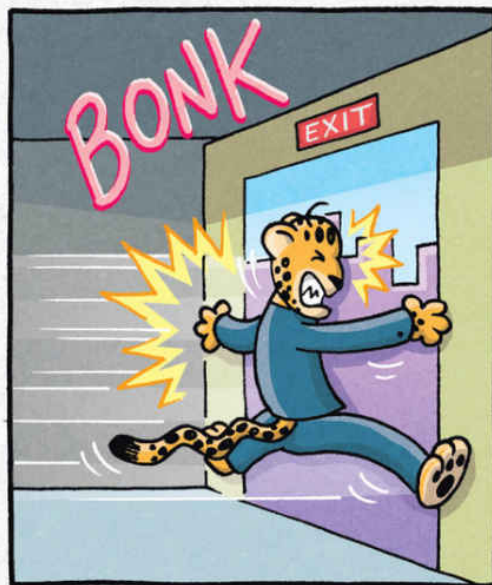
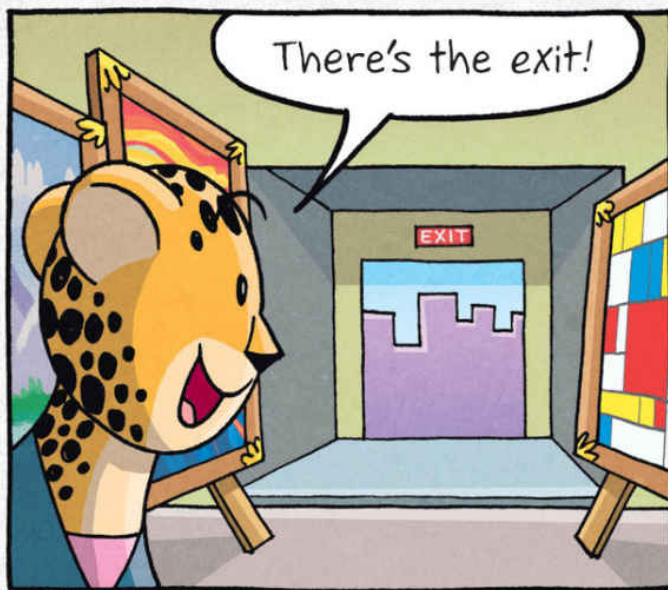
Huh? A dead end?



Wh-what is this, a *maze*?!







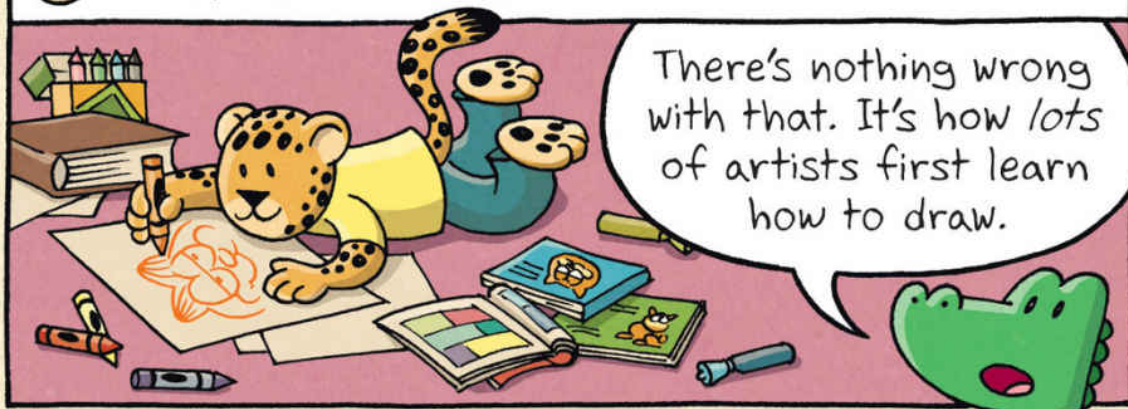








I've loved art ever since I was a little kid. I'd spend my time admiring it, studying it, and copying other people's illustrations that I liked.



I went to art school, and as other students found their artistic voices, what I was best at was quickly mimicking everyone else's styles.



Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but the school still kicked me out!



Eventually, I got a job at the museum.







I've spent years looking at paintings. I mean, **REALLY** looking. Every **detail**, every **brushstroke**. No one appreciated them as much as I did!



So when the **most famous paintings in history** were coming to the museum for the gala, I was certain that if I painted copies and swapped them with the originals, no one would even notice.



I could keep the originals all to myself, and after the gala, **MY** art would be returned to museums all over the world for people to casually glance at.







Except you realized your forgeries *WEREN'T* perfect.  
So *YOU* poisoned the hors d'oeuvres because you  
were afraid someone was going to catch a mistake.



I *WANTED* people to *LOOK* at my art. Not **THROW UP**  
on it. When everyone got sick, my plan was *ruined!*  
My forgery skills can hold up to scrutiny, but the  
paint can't hold up to **STOMACH ACID.**



So that's when you decided to  
**evacuate** the museum, **destroy**  
the evidence, and **frame** Panksy!



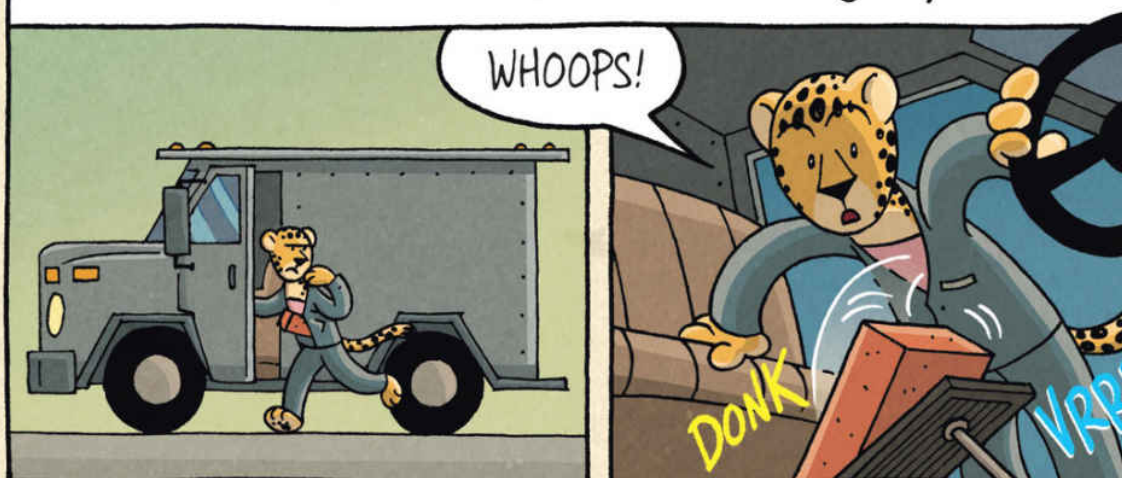




With the museum emptied, I thought I could sneak out my copies and repaint them. On the way out, I saw Panksy's ridiculous brick.



Before I had a chance to lock the back of the armored car, the brick *fell onto the gas pedal!*





I never intended to DESTROY my paintings. But if everyone *believed* the real ones were lost in a fire, at least I could still keep them all to myself.



I knew it would eventually come out that Macaroni Ancheese was **innocent**. But I figured I had time to paint *new* forgeries and hatch another plan to pass them off as the genuine articles.

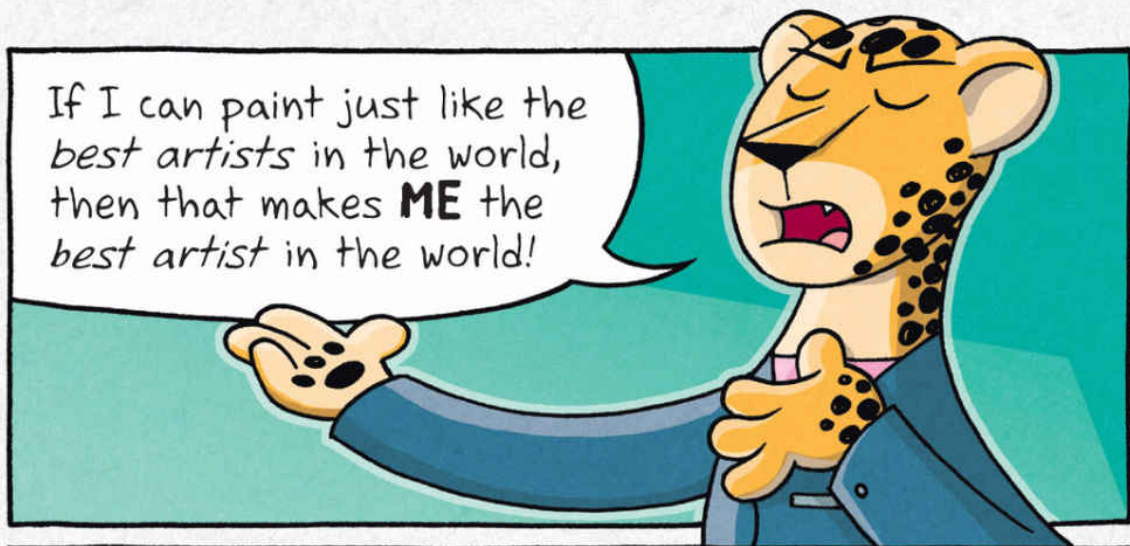


Your phonies won't fool anyone now!



But I proved my point!















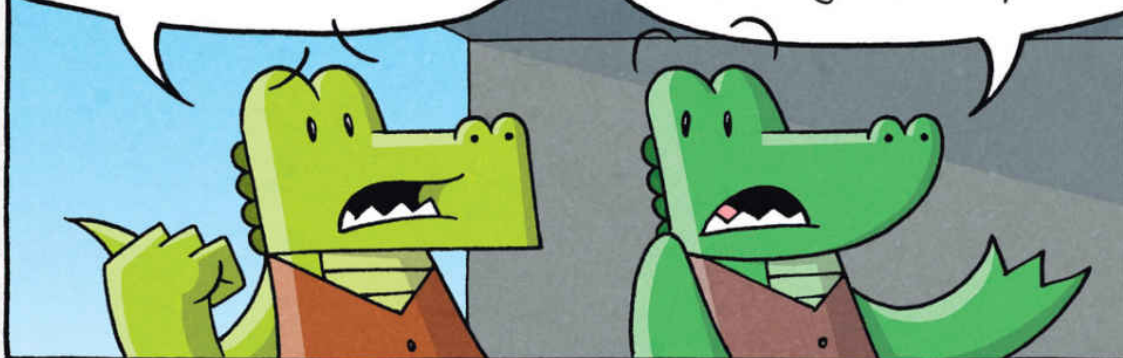
So my paintings of other paintings are just drawings that **someone else DREW???**

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S REAL ANYMORE!

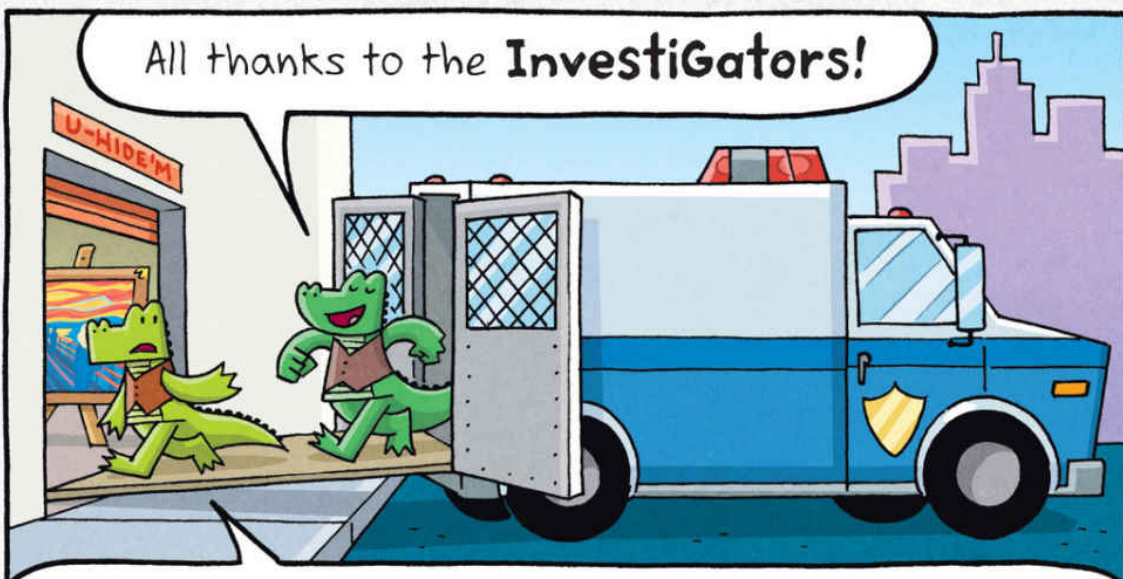


Uh... Let's get out of here before the author finds a way to break a **FIFTH** wall.

Yeah, that'll just set Savanna loose. And her grip on reality is loose enough already!



All thanks to the **InvestiGators!**

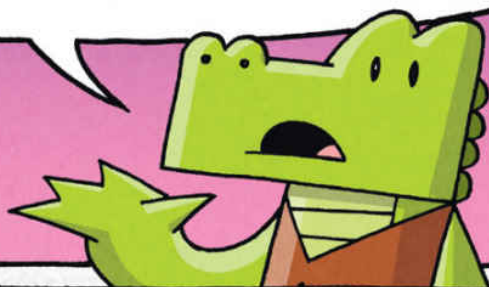


I wouldn't pat myself on the back for *THAT*, Mango.



Yes, we've recovered the art and caught the culprit. But though Savanna has committed crimes, she's certainly not EVIL. Copying the art isn't where she went wrong. It was her *belief* that there is only one definition of art, one criteria to judge an artist by, and only one way to *appreciate* art.

Hopefully with some help, Savanna can come to realize she was *mistaken*.



Speaking of which, we need to be *takin'* these paintings to the museum again.

For the FIRST time, technically.

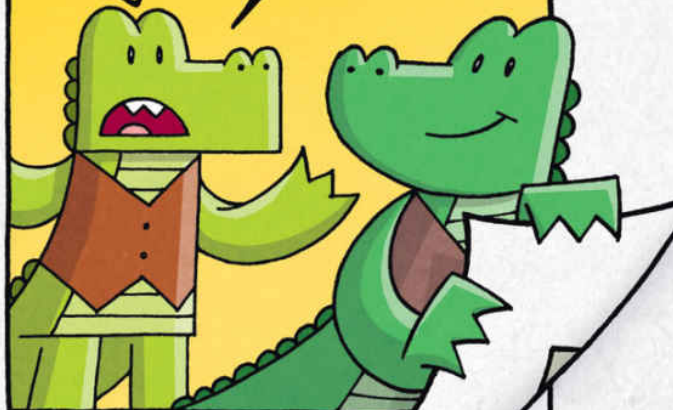


Whaddya say... skip ahead?

Skip ahead.



But **NO COW DETOURS!**





## Chapter 18

The **COPYCAT** is in the bag! And by *BAG* I mean *JAIL*. This **cheetah** turned out to be a **CHEATER** who tried to replace historical masterpieces with her own imitations.



For more, here's Vohnda Featherneck with the museum curator, Thelonious Snort.



Yes, Cici. The priceless art is back and the museum's reputation is intact. In fact, all this excitement has generated a *renewed interest* in the art world.





The exhibit will be extended and opened to the public **free of charge**, since **NO ONE** got to see the actual paintings anyway. And thanks to **Councilman Fluffles**, the city has *fully funded* the museum's budget...



...in exchange for the museum dedicating a wing to **serious balloon art!**

All the museum's expenses will be paid. Including the **hospital bills** for everyone who got food poisoning!



Well, let's hope everyone runs **TO** the museum and doesn't **GET** the runs **AT** the museum. Back to you, Cici!



Thanks for painting **THAT** picture for me, Vohnda.



Now, the weather.









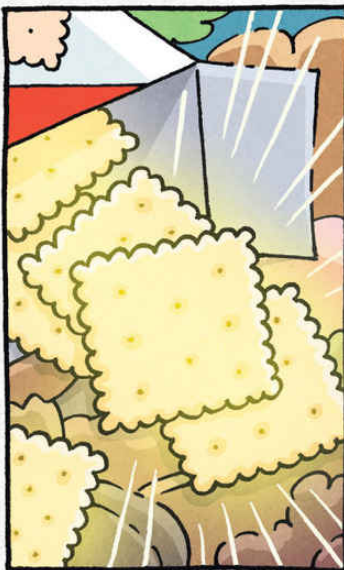










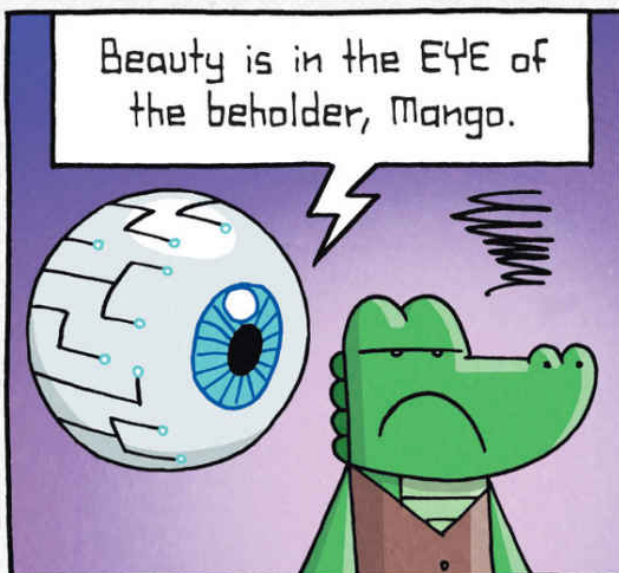
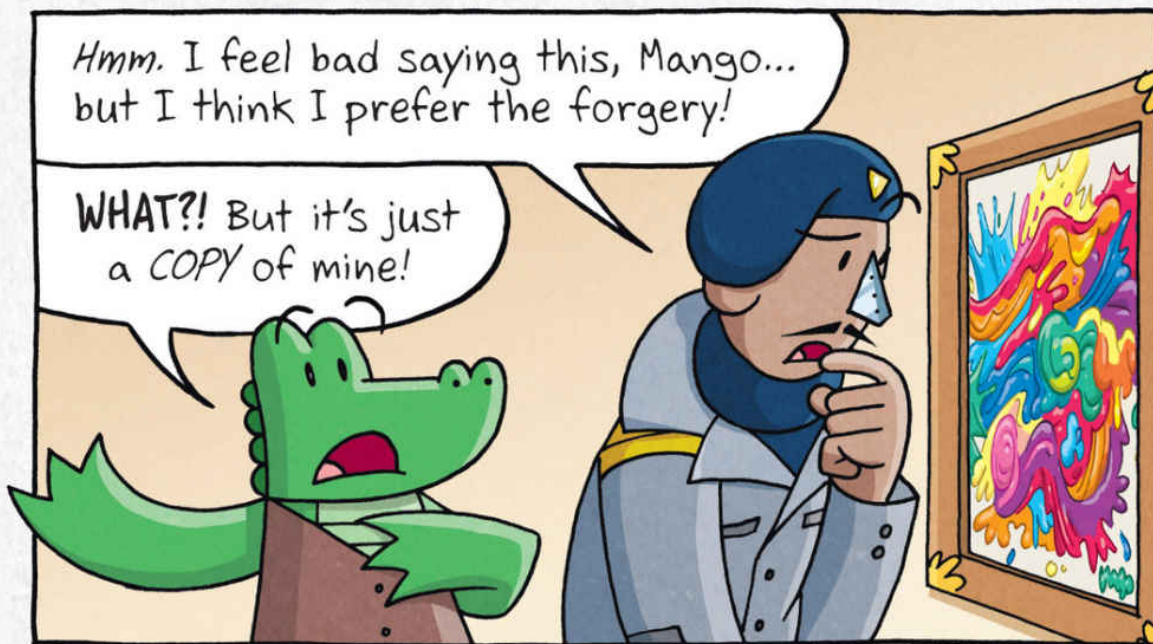




## Epilogue



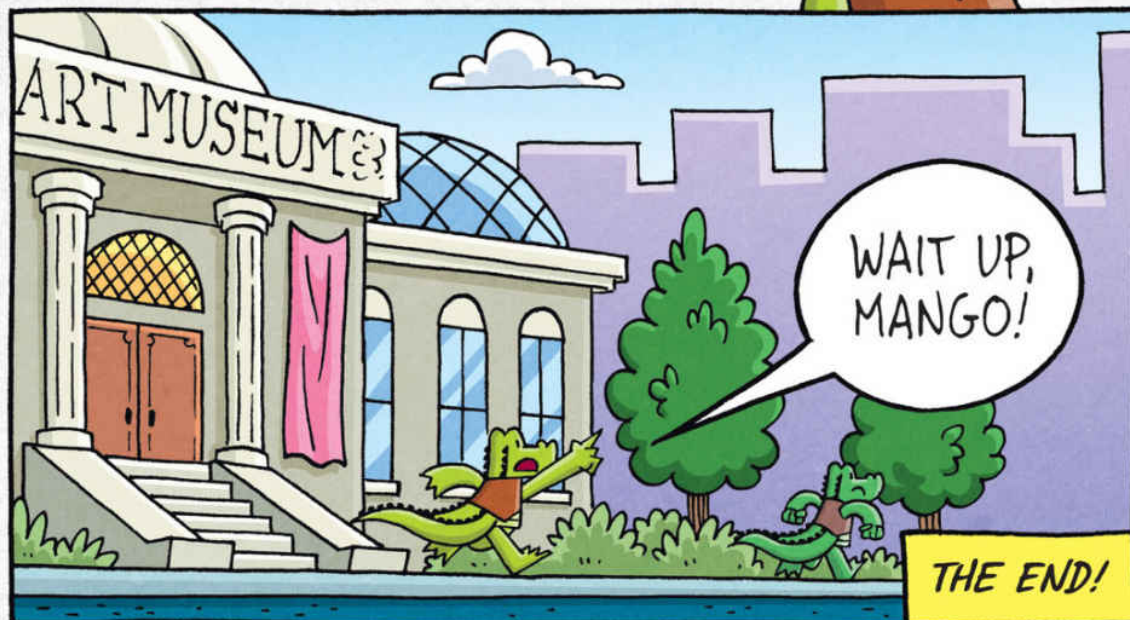
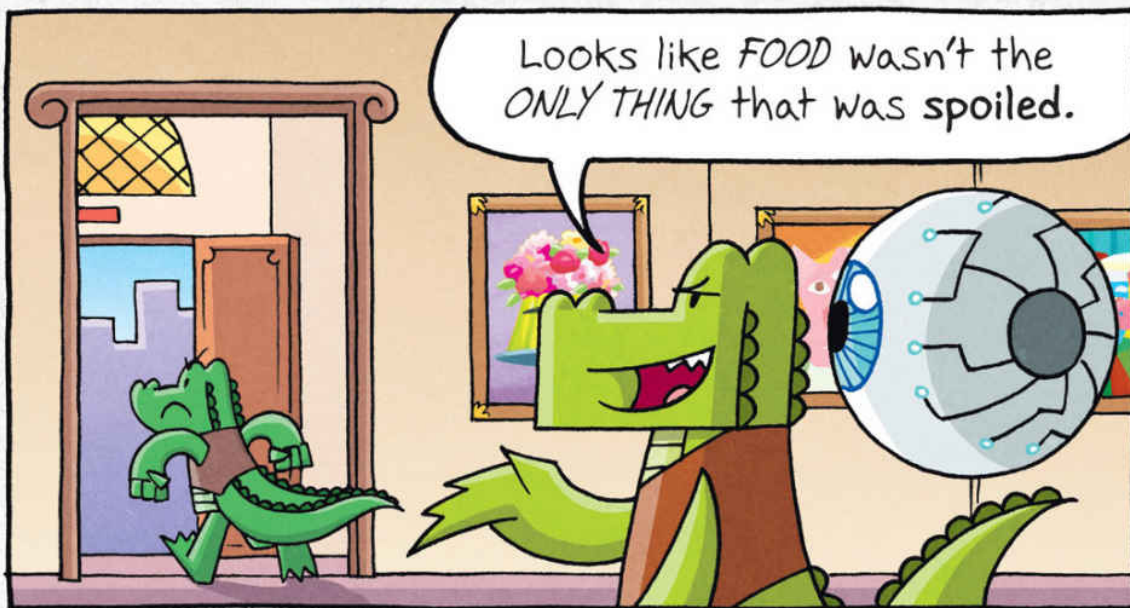












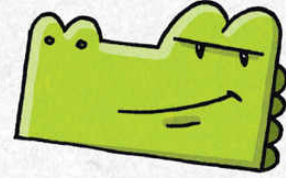


# INVESTIGATORS

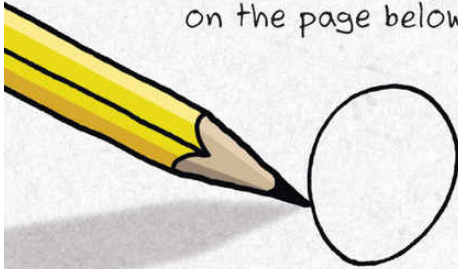
## How to draw the COPYCAT



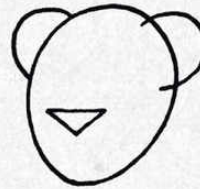
And remember:  
Copying is how many  
artists first learn  
how to draw!



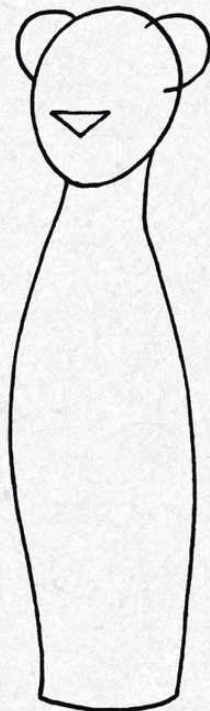
1. Start with an upside-down egg shape, with the narrower part by her chin. Leave plenty of room on the page below for her body.



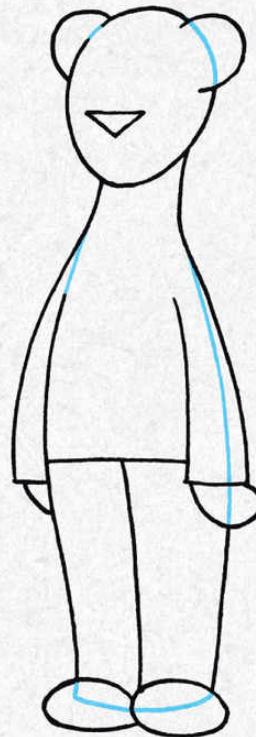
2. Draw half-circles on each side for ears and a triangle for her nose.



3. Draw a shape similar to a bowling pin or a soda bottle for her body.

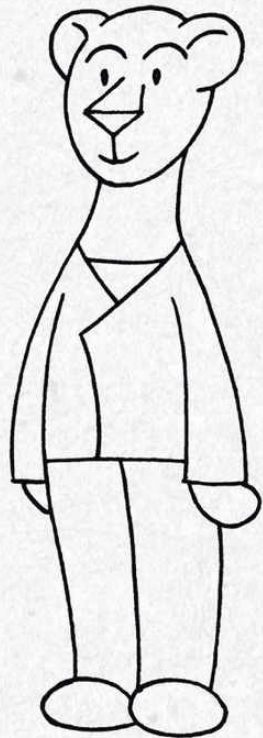


4. Add arms and legs, plus hands and feet. Erase any unnecessary lines.

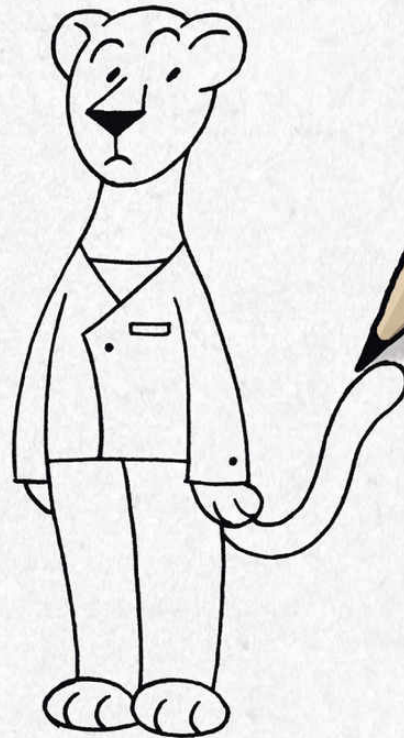




5. Draw facial features like eyes and a mouth, and her jacket and blouse.



6. Give her fingers and toes, and clothing details. Don't forget her tail!



7. This cheetah's not complete without her spots! Add some color to make your drawings really come alive.



8. Lastly, *ERASE HER BEFORE SHE ESCAPES!*





Hey, I haven't seen or heard **Cilantro** at all in this whole book!



Well, chameleons **ARE** hard to see. But in Cilantro's case...



...she's off on her **OWN** case! In the new series, **Agents of S.U.I.T.!**

Ooh!  
I can't wait to read it!

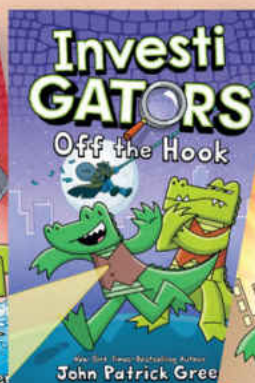
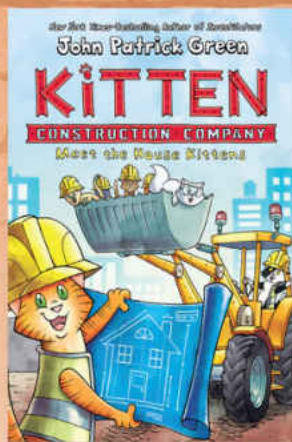
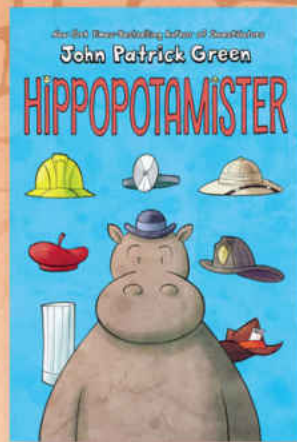


Mango and Brash will return in their next book, *All Tide Up!*

For the latest in Gator news, activities, and more, visit **InvestiGatorsBooks.com**



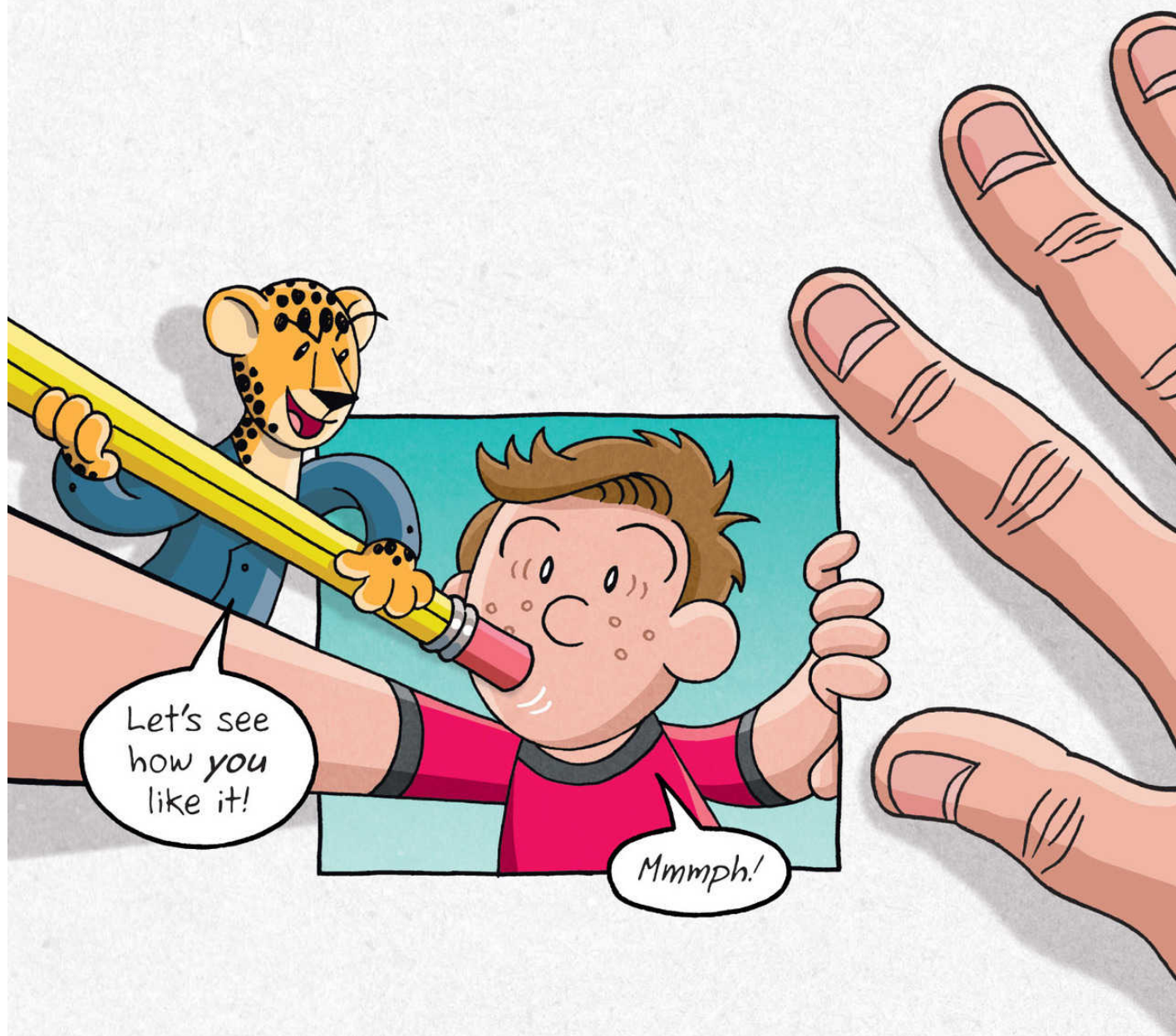
# Read the John Patrick Green Collection!



:01

First Second  
firstsecondbooks.com





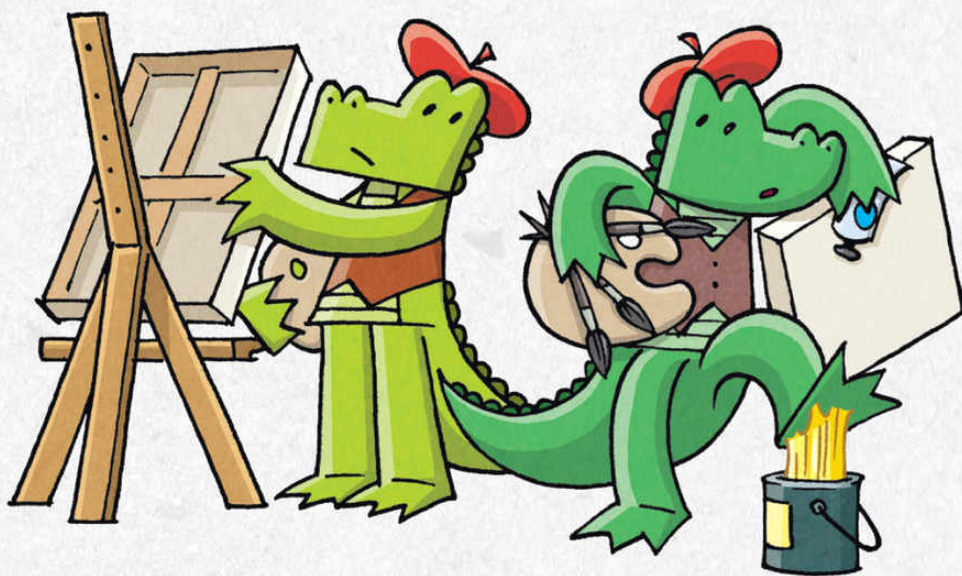






# Investi GATORS

Heist and Seek



written and illustrated by  
**John Patrick Green**

with color by Wes Dzioba

:01

First Second  
New York







Praise for *InvestiGators*  
"A sugar rush manifested as a graphic novel."

—Kirkus Reviews

The InvestiGators CANVAS the city for a thief...

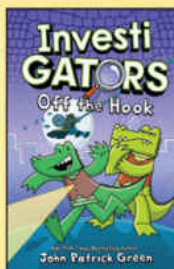


...who has truly mastered the ART of crime!



Have Mango and Brash PAINTED themselves into a corner?

THE WHOLE SERIES IS  
A WORK OF  
ART!



Cover art © 2022 by John Patrick Green

Cover design by John Patrick Green and Molly Johanson



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First Second  
New York